

MONTANA

the magazine of western history



SEEIN' SANTA

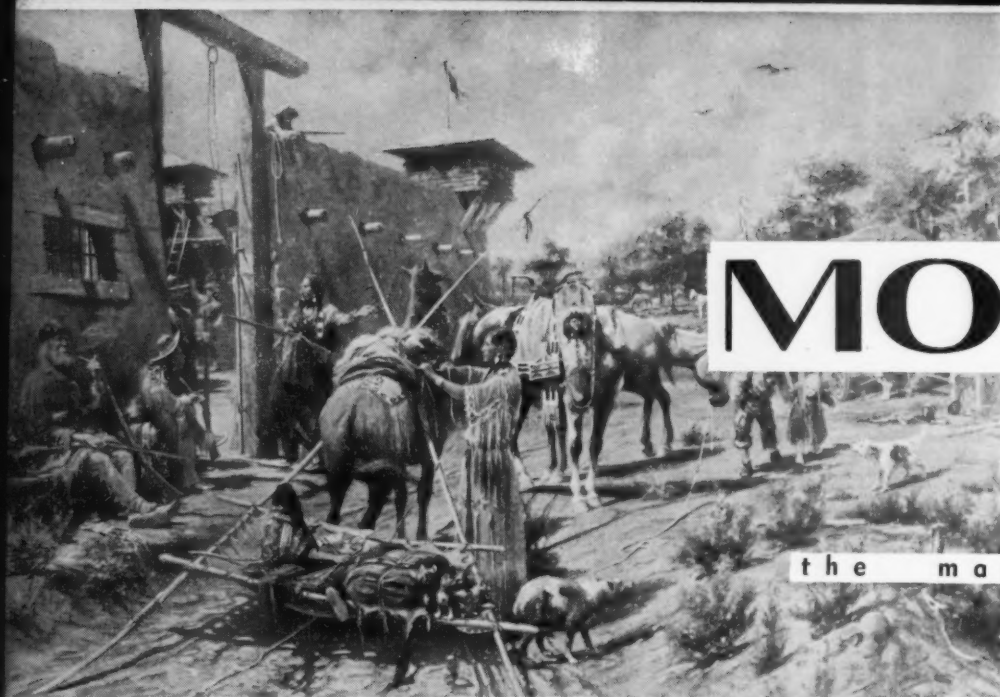
FROM THE ORIGINAL OIL BY CHARLES M. RUSSELL

WINTER 1957

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WARMHEARTED SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM THE WEST



MONT

the magazine of

"The Latest Arrivals," painted by Montana frontier artist E. S. Paxson, 1904. Montana Historical Society Collection, Helena.

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SEEN' SANTA. This cover painting is reproduced from Charlie and Nancy Russell's 1910 Christmas card, the original of which may be seen in the fine Trigg Gallery collection at Great Falls, Montana. As was so often the case, the Cowboy Artist was in a puckish mood. Contrast here the hard realism of a cold, and possibly drunken, cowboy against the fantasy mirage of a jovial Santa with his reindeer, riding the snow-crusted sagebrush range in the spirit of yuletide warmth.

IN THIS ISSUE

- | | | |
|--|--------------------|----|
| Indian Trader's Cache..... | Kathryn Wright | 2 |
| Will a yellowed envelope reveal the mystery of Custer Battlefield loot? | | |
| Worker in God's Wilderness..... | Stanley Davison | 8 |
| The Reverend Samuel Parker did visit Montana on his 1835 mission. | | |
| Flour Famine in Alder Gulch, 1864..... | Dorothy M. Johnson | 13 |
| When heavy snow delayed freight it created havoc in the gold camps. | | |
| A Christmas Story From The West..... | Dick Randall | 28 |
| Even hard-bitten cowmen appreciated the niceties of Christmas. | | |
| Last Roundup..... | Mark H. Brown | 32 |
| L. A. Huffman's sweat-begrimed diary sheds new light on the Cattle Kingdom | | |
| Irresolvable Enigma?..... | Robert W. Mardock | 36 |
| Strange concepts of the American Indian are only now subsiding. | | |
| Last of the Old West Artists, R. Farrington Elwell..... | Frederick A. Mark | 58 |
| The octogenarian protege' of Buffalo Bill Cody is Arizona's pride. | | |
| Director's Roundup: Debauche below the Cimarron..... | K. Ross Toole | 64 |
| Oklahoma U's Great Plains Conference left an alkali taste. | | |
| Reader's Remuda..... | Robert G. Athearn | 48 |

Broncs and bluebloods are mingled in the new crop of Western books, including an able Guthrie novel and a fine study of Sherman by our own, modest, book-review editor, Dr. Athearn:

These Thousand Hills by A. B. Guthrie, Jr., reviewed by Walter Van Tilburg Clark. *Frontier Editor* by Daniel W. Whetstone, reviewed by Dorothy M. Johnson. *The Life and Personal Writings of Eugene Manlove Rhodes: A Bar Cross Man* by W. H. Hutchinson, reviewed by Earl Pomeroy. *Frontier Photographer: Stanley J. Morrow's Dakota Years* by Wesley R. Hurt and William E. Lass, reviewed by Dwain Ervin. *The Rocky Mountain Revolution* by Stewart H. Holbrook, reviewed by Carl Ubbelohde. *Drummers and Dreamers* by Click Relander, reviewed by Edgar I. Stewart. *A Tour of The Prairies* by Washington Irving (reissue), reviewed by Colin B. Goodykoontz. *Lone Eagle, The White Sioux* by Floyd Shuster Maine, reviewed by Merrill J. Mattes. *Ghosts of the Glory Trail* by Nell Murbarger, reviewed by Murial Sibell Wolle. *William Tecumseh Sherman and the Settlement of the West* by Robert G. Athearn, reviewed by James G. Olson.



An early photo of the Indian Trader, W. P. Moncure, left, in his Busby store.

INDIAN TRADER'S CACHE

BY KATHRYN WRIGHT

IT WAS AFTER midnight and ceremonial fires were flickering into embers when two men moved stealthily from the doorway of the general store at Busby, Montana, a trading town on the Northern Cheyenne Indian reservation. Each had a firm grip on handles of a large wooden box. Cautiously they made their way across the highway in front of the store toward a black shape looming from a brush-grown knoll. They struggled up the incline, carefully opened a gate in a steel wire fence surrounding the shape and lowered the box to the ground.

The smaller of the two men, shielding a flashlight from the highway and town below, played its beam over the shape's rock and mortar bulk. A large bronze lettered plaque on one side gleamed dully in the light.

The small man moved closer. He pressed his hand along the bottom edge of the plaque and slowly lifted it to reveal a deep rectangular crevice.

Swiftly the two men placed contents of the wooden box in the crevice. Then the man with the flashlight took a long bulging manila envelope from the pocket of his jacket and put it in the vault-like hole. A metal-edged heavy glass shield was taken from the box and screwed tightly over the crevice. The bronze plaque was lowered and locked in place. The men picked up the wooden box and headed back toward the general store.

Thus one June night in 1936 small, wiry W. P. Moncure, Busby general store merchant and adopted brother of the Cheyenne Indian tribe, cached away in the

MONTANA the magazine of western history

secret vault of a rocky, tower-shaped monument historical mementos, sacred Indian relics of bygone days and—directions to what may well be a treasure of several thousand dollars!

The monument was constructed by Moncure, trader on the reservation from 1901 to 1941, in tribute to the memory of his friend, Chief Two Moon, leader of the northern band of Cheyennes. Two Moon, who has been called Two Moons by the whites, was a warlike Indian, bitterly opposed to the influx of traders, gold seekers and settlers. He counted many coups and took his share of scalps, but changed his ways after the Battle of the Little Big Horn June 25, 1876, and became a scout for General Nelson A. Miles, giving valuable aid in the roundup of hostiles. His deeds of valor, his wise counsel still are talked of by Cheyennes and whites alike.

When the monument to his memory was dedicated June 25, 1938, several hundred spectators were on hand. They milled around the rock and mortar tower, stared at wrinkled, feathered warriors who under Two Moon had helped give the United States military its most decisive defeat, and then strolled off to watch Indian dances and foot races.

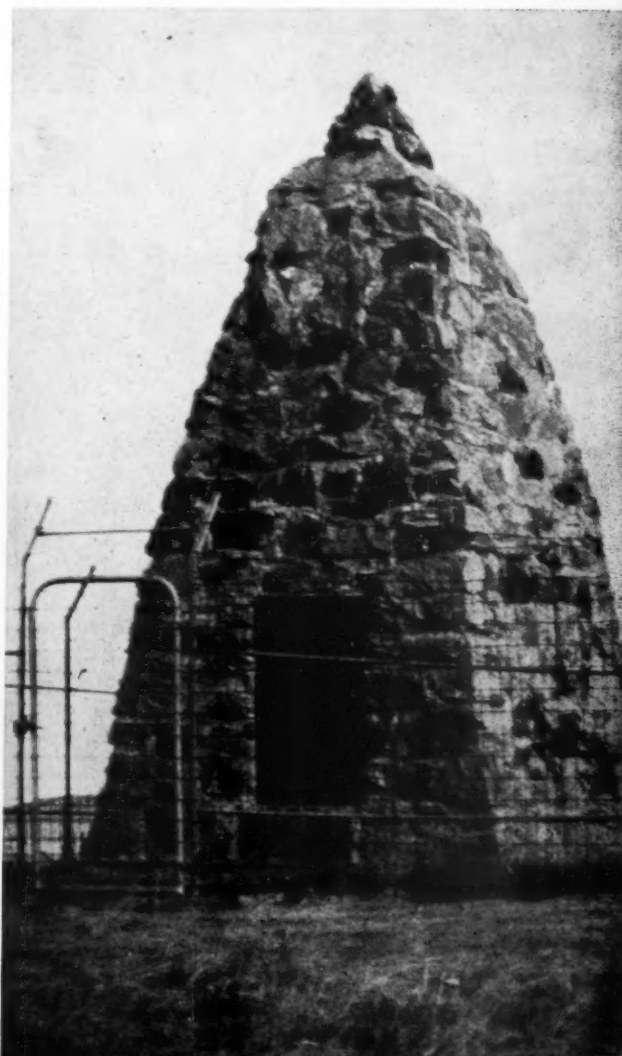
Since then the monument has stood unnoticed and generally unknown, a lonely obelisk rising from a bluff beside Montana State Highway No. 8 in Big Horn County. Once in a while a traveler, slowing down to observe the speed limit through Busby, sees the rocky tower and, if curiosity is sufficiently strong, stops and climbs the bluff.

I did. And I read the legend on the bronze plaque: "Here lie the remains of Two Moons, chief of the Cheyenne Indians, who led his men against General Custer in the battle of the Little Big Horn, June 25, 1876. Erected by W. P. Moncure, Indian Trader."

Here is the stone marker for the grave of the valiant Cheyenne Two Moon, built more than 20 years ago by the Indian Trader Moncure. The envelope held in the case behind the plaque may solve some of the mystery of the bloody Battle of the Little Big Horn.

We have been in possession of this manuscript for some time. It is published now only after assurance that strong security measures have been taken to avert any possible vandalism of the monument and its contents; and that the trust established by W. P. Moncure would not be violated except by his consent. The Cheyenne Tribal Council, the U. S. Indian Service, National Park Service and the Historical Society of Montana, along with Kathryn Wright, historians and others who are vitally interested, for months now have been working for a legal opening of the monument's vault, very soon—rather than in 1986—which might be altogether too late. The present thinking is that all historical objects, since they relate to the Battle of the Little Big Horn, be deeded or loaned by the Tribal Council to the Custer Battlefield National Monument museum. Here they can be protected and shown to much greater advantage. As for the intriguing part—the long-missing "loot"—it remains to see what the mysterious envelope contains. Perhaps it will prove a hoax. Perhaps not. Only time will tell.

THE EDITORS.





A member of the Cheyenne tribe poses for author Wright, revealing the secret of the sealed glass compartment behind the bronze dedicatory plaque. Contents of the intriguing compartment are seen at bottom, p. 5.

Who was, or is, Moncure?

Why did he erect a monument to an Indian who was in on the massacre of the Seventh Cavalry?

What was there between this white man and a warlike Cheyenne?

Inquiries to libraries, to a national research bureau, to the Bureau of Indian Affairs brought no answers. There was nothing in their files or collections of historical relics to indicate existence of such a monument. Nothing was known of a trader named Moncure.

However, to affirm what had been seen with my own eyes, I persuaded Paul L. Fickinger, then director of the Billings, Montana, division of the Indian bureau, to accompany me to Busby. Later, with Fickinger's aid, a search was made of Big Horn county records. This revealed the transfer of the monument site from S. L. Busby, an early-day rancher, to W. P. and Anna J. Moncure. It was shown also that in 1941 the Moncures deeded the land and monument to the United States "in trust for the Northern Cheyenne tribe."

Then, when my husband didn't need the family car and I had no pressing chores at home, I began a series of pilgrimages to Busby. I wanted to know the story of the monument, the story of the trader, Moncure. Thus I became acquainted with Willie Hollow Breast, tribal council member and maintenance man at the Busby school. He knew Moncure well. Every summer Moncure visited the Cheyennes at Busby. He came from his home at Calabassas, California, to see his red brothers.

I began a correspondence with Moncure, who answered my queries promptly and in detail. Also I continued my trips to Busby. And one day Hollow Breast climbed with me up the brush-grown knoll, pressed his fingers along the bottom edge of the bronze plaque and let me list and photograph contents of the secret vault. Among them were stone tools used by Indians long gone to the Happy Hunting Ground, an early-day bullet mold and capper, sacred Cheyenne relics, a Seventh Cavalry gun, arrowheads, a portrait of Two Moon and a manila envelope.

The manila envelope was of particular interest.

Typed on its face is: "June 25, 1936. Why I erected the Two Moon monument. My connection with Montana Pioneers, Broadwater, Granville Stewart, W. G. Conrad and others. Busby, Montana, where Gen. Custer spent his last night on earth. History and location of Starved to Death Rock. Bozeman Expedition 1874 up Rosebud Creek. Two soldiers got away from Custer Battle alive. History, Indian fort up Busby Creek. Hiding place and location of money and trinkets taken from dead soldiers on Custer Battle Field. To be opened June 25, 1986. Key Remove screws with off set screw driver. W. P. Moncure Busby, Montana June 25, 1936."

Right. The dismal Indian town of Busby as it appears from the monument site. The monument, itself, is on land bought by the Moncures and deeded to the Northern Cheyenne tribe in 1941. Below, right, the glass-faced sealed compartment. The mysterious envelope is at bottom, center.



True to his promise made in a letter, Moncure looked me up when he came through Billings in August, 1955, and again this past summer. The eighty-year-old ex-Indian trader had been fishing in Yellowstone National Park and was en route to Busby to again visit the Cheyennes.

Moncure first came to Montana from his native state, Virginia, at the turn of the century and worked in Butte, Helena and Missoula. There he met many of Montana's pioneers whose names are perpetuated in history. He was offered a government post, but turned it down when the chance came to buy the general store on the Northern Cheyenne reservation. It took many years for him to gain the friendship and confidence of the Indians, who, for numerous good reasons, disliked and distrusted white men in general. But the trader's fair dealings, his ever-ready aid for unfortunate reservation residents, his support and cooperation won him the Cheyennes' esteem. They finally took him into the tribe and into their confidence.

"The relics and information I put away in that vault will all come to light in due time," Moncure said as he sipped coffee, holding the cup in a hand strong, steady and tanned from years of active outdoor living.

"Due time," he murmured. "There are a few old chiefs still living who know the legends and tribal secrets Two Moon told me. Those are the things I wrote down when I lived among them. Not for them, but for their children's children, so they'll know how the Cheyennes lived when they were free."

Real credit must go to Mrs. Wright for unearthing this story, but more than that, she has been the diplomatic courier and the ambassador responsible for arranging that the monument will be opened sometime this spring. If the envelope actually reveals the long-missing loot, K. Wright should get credit for one of the exciting historical finds of our time. She is a free-lance writer and newspaper woman residing at Billings, Montana.

"Due time" is 1986, the date on the mysterious envelope. "Due time" for others is now. In thirty years the monument might be looted by vandals, contents of the vault scattered beyond recovery and "money and trinkets taken from dead soldiers on Custer Battle Field" found, pawned and forgotten.

Fickinger, who knows of the monument's cache, and Dr. Charles Kuhlman of Billings, eminent authority and author of the analytical study of the battle, "Legend Into History," think the vault should be opened





A fine early Huffman photo of a group of Cheyenne with their priest at the old Agency Mission.

through legitimate negotiations with the Cheyenne tribe and its contents studied and evaluated.

"It is easily possible," Kuhlman said, "that the vault may contain clues of the greatest importance. Particularly the contents of the envelope may shed light on questions still puzzling Custer historians."

One of the puzzling questions is: What became of personal belongings stripped from cavalry troopers' bodies? (When found, Custer and his dead were mostly stark naked.)

Some currency and a few matches were recovered from Indians when they were rounded up later and put on reservations. There were a number of guns, too. But no trace has ever been found of the bulk of personal items a man would be carrying into battle—rings, religious emblems, pictures of loved ones and money in the form of coins.

According to interviews with two Seventh Cavalry sergeants, John M. Ryan and Daniel Kanipe, who were with Major Reno during the Custer battle, Custer's men went to their last stand carrying four months' pay.

Ryan and Kanipe, whose stories were published in the Hardin, Montana, *Tribune* June 22, 1923, and the Greensboro, North Carolina, *Daily Record* April 27, 1924, respectively, said the paymaster had distributed wages when the cavalry was a day's march out of Fort Abraham Lincoln, Dakota Territory.

Ryan said the paymaster joined the cavalry after it had started the long march to the Little Big Horn. "If he had paid at the fort some of the troopers would have undoubtedly deserted," Ryan said. This conforms with generally accepted historical fact.



A trooper with Company K of the Fifth U.S. Infantry during the terrible Indian Wars, H. Stieffel, made this painting of Two Moon's camp on the Tongue River, about 1878.



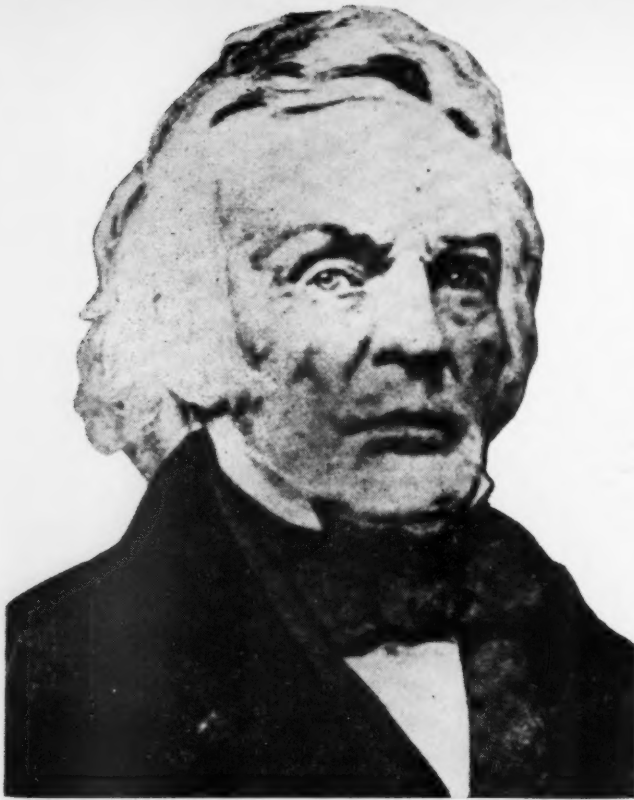
The sergeant estimated that the Seventh carried a total of \$25,000 into battle!

Not all of it belonged to battle casualties. Not all of it was in currency. Army regulations covering 1876, which were checked for me by Raymond P. Flynn, archivist at Washington, D. C., at the request of Chief of Air Staff General Nathan F. Twining, show that the troopers were paid in gold, silver and U. S. treasury or bank notes.

And so, somewhere within the confines of the Northern Cheyenne Indian reservation in southeastern Montana lies treasure, both real and historical. Moncure knows where it is. So do some of the older Cheyennes. But they aren't talking. The only directions to it are contained in a manila envelope which can be seen through a dusty, cobwebbed glass shield, in a rock cairne, isolated and lonely off a little-traveled highway near the hamlet of Busby.

Above: Author Kathryn Wright confers with Milton Johnson, center, in the office of the Bureau of Indian Affairs at Billings, Montana, and with Carl Pierson of the Cheyenne Agency at Lame Deer, regarding security measures to be taken to prevent looting of the Moncure Monument. Right: A group of Northern Cheyenne posed with Moncure in an early-day photograph.





The Reverend Samuel Parker.

WORKER IN GOD'S WILDERNESS

By Stanley Davison

IT IS PROBABLE that the earliest Christian missionary to preach in what is now Montana and Idaho, was the Reverend Samuel Parker of the Congregational Church at Middlefield, Massachusetts. He was first by several years to conduct services, in Wyoming too, for the Flatheads and a large group of Nez Perce visitors from the west.

Within the present boundaries of the first mentioned two states, that honor may be shared with a Nez Perce Indian named Charle, who learned from Parker to lead his men in prayers, morning and evening and before meals.¹ The missionary and the Indian were members of a party that camped in a little canyon on Cote's Creek in present-day east-central Idaho, a stream now known as Medicine Lodge Creek,² on the evening of September 4, 1835. Charle was only about two weeks away from home. But the Reverend Sam Parker had come a long way to this camp in Cote's Defile.

In a sense, the trip had begun in March of 1833, when the pastor read the *Christian Advocate's* account of the presence

of the now famous Nez Perce and Flathead delegation in search of missionaries to come to the Rocky Mountains. Although a middle-aged man with a family of three children, Parker decided to offer himself as one to make the trip. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions turned him down as being too old, suggesting that he work with Indians closer to home. In 1834 he raised funds and tried to make the trip independently, but started late and missed the steamboat on which he had booked passage from St. Louis for the first leg of the journey. Meanwhile the Methodists were sending out Jason and Daniel Lee. They by-passed the Flatheads and Nez Perces and began their work among the people of the lower Columbia River (in present Washington and Oregon), again in 1835.

Stan Davison's Ph.D., in Western American History is from the University of California; but he graduated and has taught at Montana State University. He has just been awarded the Historical Society of Montana 1957 Research Grant for distinguished work in the field of western history.

MONTANA the magazine of western history

At this season of the year it seems appropriate to reappraise the valiant efforts of one of Christ's earliest disciples in the Northern Rockies.

In the course of raising money for this attempt, the Reverend Parker met a young doctor, Marcus Whitman, and recruited him as a companion on the venture.³ The Indian delegation had traveled to St. Louis in company with fur traders returning from the trappers' rendezvous on the Green River, and the two missionaries planned to follow this same idea in reverse to reach the Rocky Mountains. Accordingly they traveled to St. Louis and there obtained permission from officials of the American Fur Company to join the firm's outgoing expedition. They rode the steamer *Siam* as far as Liberty, the jumping-off place for the overland trip. This was a two-weeks boat ride, and with some ensuing delays, the party did not get

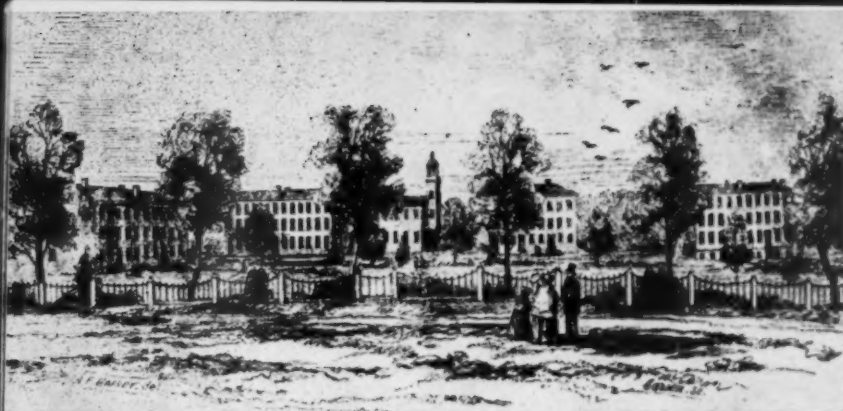
under way again until May 14. Even then, the two missionaries were barely ready to start with the others. Parker, having learned how hard it was to collect money for such journeys, had become almost parsimonious, and insisted on limiting their personal pack-string to one elderly mule. Neither of the two pilgrims had the faintest notion of how to pack the beast, but Parker undertook the job. Even before they were out of town, the packs began to come undone, and the men had to stop constantly to tie things together again.

Lucien Fontenelle, in charge of the caravan, was kind enough to let them load some of their troublesome baggage into his wagon. However, most of the men were openly resentful at the presence of the two



Typical high terrain crossed by Parker's party, looking Northeast toward crest of the wild Bitterroot Range from summit of Salmon Mt.

PHOTOS HERE AND PAGE 7 COURTESY ERNST C. PETERSON, HAMILTON MONTANA



Farfield Medical College, N. Y., where Marcus Whitman received his medical training. Below, next page: Three Nez Perce Elders and three Ministers at Lapwai, Idaho, Mission about 1880.

missionaries, feeling that it curtailed their freedom to swear and otherwise express themselves. Whitman tried to offset this hostility by working hard at such jobs as making rafts for river-crossings, but apparently in vain. He writes of having rotten eggs thrown at them. Parker reported that the men of the brigade even plotted to kill them. A little later, Whitman was able to establish himself in the favor of all by revealing his skill as a doctor. All the way up the Platte and over the South Pass he found himself called upon to practice his art; but the climax awaited them at the Green River rendezvous. There they found the celebrated Jim Bridger, with the equally celebrated Blackfoot arrow-point embedded in his back. Marcus Whitman's success in extracting this 3-inch barb won him the admiration of whites and Indians alike.

Parker, although less gifted in earning acceptance from his associates, did exhibit a flair for getting along with the Indians. Back on the North Platte he had entertained a band of Ogallala Sioux, by singing "Watchman, Tell Us of the Night," with several encores of the same. Rev. Parker reported that these Sioux asked to have Christian teachers sent among them. Now, at the rendezvous, there were more than two thousand Indians, including forty lodges of the Flatheads and Nez Perces,⁴ prime objects of the missionary visit. The chiefs of both tribes welcomed the churchmen warmly. The Flathead leader told how he started out at once to meet them when he learned that they were en route, and how along the way the Crow Indians had stolen his horse. Even this loss he could forget, now that he was sure the missionaries were really on the way. He further said that the Flatheads had al-

ready heard something about the Christian religion, and would be ready to follow the teachings of the missionaries who would come among them.

Parker and Whitman conferred as to their next move. Clearly there was more work ahead than two men could handle, and a more substantial mission was called for. Whitman said he would like to go back to recruit the needed additions, but did not expect Parker to agree to being thus left without a companion. To his pleased surprise, Parker said, "Without divine protection, we could not go safely together; with it, I can go alone."

So Whitman turned back and Parker went on, but hardly alone. Bridger and many of the Indians were going as far as Pierre's Hole (present Idaho), and from there Parker was in company with a considerable group of Nez Perces and some of the Flatheads. His destination was Walla Walla (present Washington), home of the Nez Perces, under whose protection and guidance he now placed himself. It is doubtful if he realized that there was a distinction between the home regions of the two tribes, and that by going to Walla Walla he would be losing contact with the Flatheads. Seeing them thus closely associated, he could hardly know that hundreds of wilderness miles normally separated the two peoples, and that while the

¹ Samuel Parker, *Journal of an Exploring Tour Beyond the Rocky Mountains*, 2nd ed. (Ithaca, 1840) is the basic authority for this account.

² Warren A. Ferris, *Life in the Rocky Mountains*, Paul C. Phillips, ed. (Denver, 1940), 96.

³ Clifford M. Drury, *Marcus Whitman, M. D., Pioneer and Martyr* (Caldwell, 1937), 68.

⁴ Parker was one of the many who commented on the apparent misnomer in the case of this tribe. See Alvin M. Josephy, "The Naming of the Nez Perce," *Montana, The Magazine of Western History*, Autumn, 1955, for a study of this question.

Nez Perces often came east, the Flatheads returned the visits much more rarely. It is also pertinent to recall here that the Indian delegation to St. Louis consisted of three Nez Perces and one Flathead;⁵ this fact, known to Whitman and Parker, may have influenced their choice of a first location. In any case, it was with this mixed group that Parker was traveling toward the northwest, early in September, headed for the lower Snake River country of present Idaho and Washington.

Upon reaching Cote's Defile they lingered a day or two until another band of Nez Perces could join up for the trip across the mountains. All the way since leaving Pierre's Hole, Rev. Parker had been preaching extensively and teaching the Indians the commandments and prayers of his own faith. He taught each listener one commandment at a time, with instructions to teach it in turn to others. Parker felt gratification at the rapid progress of these eager learners.

Now, with the arrival of the new contingent, he found himself presented with a new opening for explaining Christian doctrine. Among the group was a boy of 16 who was dying of some malady. For this reason, and because Parker informed them that the next day would be the Sabbath, no travel was planned for that day. The minister took the occasion to suggest that a service be held. They agreed, asking where he would like them to assemble. He mentioned the grove of willows along the creek, but they felt that this would not be suitable. They seemed more pleased with his suggestion that some sort of shelter could be arranged from the coverings of their tents.

With no further instruction from him, they went to work next morning, fashioning a chapel from the assembled skins of many tents. Mr. Parker was surprised and pleased when he saw it: one hundred feet long and twenty wide, the ground all covered with beautifully dressed skins and furs. The worshippers were seated in rows on each side of an aisle, the chiefs gathered in a semi-circle in front; and all in their best finery. Parker wrote in his journal, "I could not have believed they

had the means, nor could have known how, to have erected so convenient and so decent a place of worship, and especially as it was the first time they had had public worship." Thrilled at this evidence of interest and understanding, he conducted a full length service, with a sermon on the principles of Christian morality.

On that same day the Nez Perce boy died. His people went about burial preparations and ceremonies in a way that impressed the minister as not too heathenish, except that they buried all the boy's clothing and other belongings with him. Tactfully the missionary asked that he be allowed to speak at the grave, and availed himself of this chance to expound the doctrine of resurrection and eternal life. The Nez Perces of the new band, hearing all this for the first time, were especially interested. They came to him singly and in small groups to ask questions and learn more of this new teaching. This incident, together with the inspiring service of the morning, left the minister with the feeling

⁵ Francis Haines, *The Nez Perces, Tribesmen of the Columbia Plateau* (Norman, 1955), 57. Also Drury, *op. cit.*, 106.





that he had already made headway in bringing Christianity to the Indians of the Northwest.

Samuel Parker had need of some encouragement, as his never-robust health was beginning to weaken. First it was a cold, then "inflammation of the lungs," followed by a series of related diseases that left him wondering if he would survive this mountain wilderness. Furthermore, the next two weeks threatened to be the most arduous of the trip, coupling a crossing of formidable ranges with the prospect of famine in the game-less mountains beyond the Salmon River.

Parker was well aware that he was hardly the type to be undertaking such pioneering. He was 56, somewhat overweight, and far more a scholar than an outdoorsman. On the way out he had relied on the Reverend Whitman and the others to do the cooking and the camp chores. Now determination, courage and faith sustained him as he faced this last and hardest leg of the journey to Walla Walla.

Knowing of this stretch of country where they would have to carry their own food, rather than find it on the hoof the Indians were thinking of buffalo when they broke camp and rode on up Cote's Creek. Dried buffalo meat was the proper ration to carry on such a trip. In the past

few years, bison had begun to appear in considerable numbers on the Snake River plains and along Lost River and the Lemhi. There was a good chance that they might find some here along Cote's Creek. But a more dependable place to hunt buffalo lay just ahead, along the creeks at the very head of the Missouri River drainage. This western tribe had long made hunts on the Atlantic side of the Divide, and it was probably with the idea of finding buffalo here that the party swung northwest through Cote's Defile rather than continuing westward over the easy pass between Day's Creek⁶ and the upper Lemhi, or East Fork of the Salmon.



Left, top, present summit of Nez Perce Pass, used for centuries by Indians as a north-south pass-way. Region thru which Parker passed, below, at present Idaho-Montana line. 1873 Kamiah, Idaho, Presbyterian Indian church, right. Below: Big Sheep Creek Basin, today, near Cote's Defile. Courtesy U.S. Forest Service.

Parker's diary is disappointingly thin at this point, being long on mention of his aches and pains but short on details of landmarks along the way. He did record that they passed mountains of volcanic rock, that the soil was black, and that there was good grass for the horses. On the second day he observed a deposit of white marl clay, useful as a dry cleaner for buffalo robes. Actually, there is not much in the way of landmarks, as the route traverses a series of high, rounded mountains, with growths of sage, aspen and occasional timberline patches of evergreen, like any of a hundred other places along that part of the high divide of the great Rocky Mountain chain.

In any case, it is clear that he is not describing the country at the head of Birch Creek, where Idaho State Highway 28 today crosses over into the Lemhi Valley. The generally accepted "all Idaho" route of Rev. Parker has him traversing this pass, but it is broad, gentle and mountainless, at the very time when Parker is telling of high volcanic mountains. Ferris describes this more southerly pass as "... so free from all obstructions that even



wagons might cross with ease."⁷ Again it is to be noted that there would have been no purpose in even entering Cote's Defile had their intention not been to keep a northeast course. To do otherwise from this point they would have had to back-track, and the minister makes no mention of such a detour. Had they been aiming at the low pass near Gilmore, their route would have been up Day's Creek, not Cote's. As it was they were headed straight into what is now Montana.

They may have crossed over the Medicine Lodge Pass⁸ onto Deadman's Creek, or possibly have veered more to the west and hit the head of Nicholia Creek, above the old Harkness Ranch. Probably the Indians didn't bother to inform Rev. Parker that they were on the Atlantic slope at this point, as he almost certainly would have mentioned it, had he known.

⁷ Now Birch Creek. The grave of the pioneer John Day, for whom the creek was first named, is located close by this stream and not far from Idaho State Highway 28, some thirty miles from the top of the pass near Gilmore.

⁸ Ferris, *op. cit.*, 97.

⁹ The present author spent three days on a reconnaissance trip in this area in August, 1955. Medicine Lodge Pass, marked "Bannack Pass" on many maps, is barely passable for an automobile. At the Divide there is a rough log gateway, bearing the name Bannack Pass, and a weathered wooden sign explaining that the stage coach between Bannack and Corrine followed that route in 1862 and subsequent years. That probably accounts for the confusing duplication of names; there is another Bannack Pass through the same range, some miles to the west, north of Leadore.





Earliest known photograph of the Whitman Mission near Walla Walla, Washington: 1. Mill. 2. Mansion House. 3. Blacksmith shop. 4. The Mission House where Marcus Whitman was murdered by Indians.

Possibly he was too ill to care. But it is most likely that he did not know his exact whereabouts, as it is evident that during much of his trip he was pretty well lost.

This is a confusing piece of terrain, which baffled map-makers for many years. Even maps made as late as 1890 fail to show correctly the southerly hook in the Continental Divide at the head of Nicholia Creek and the other western forks of the Red Rock Creek system, high up on the Beaverhead drainage west of Lima and Dell, Montana. Back in Parker's time, careful observers like Ferris, lost their bearings in that tangle of creeks and divides. Ferris writes of going eastward from the head of Day's Creek to Cote's Defile, which in turn brought him onto the East Fork of the Salmon. Obviously this is impossible, and anyone wishing to travel from the head of Day's Creek to the Lemhi would simply cross the low divide to the west, and be on the Lemhi or East Fork at once. In another place, Ferris states that the Lemhi and Cote's Creek rise on the same ridge, while in fact their waters nowhere approach each other. Even Ferris' celebrated map reveals that he was hazy on the location of these and other creeks.

Returning to Minister Parker's own case, he had mistaken Camas Creek near Dubois, Idaho, for the head of the Salmon River. Later, on actually reaching the Salmon, he was to state that this stream rose in two lakes north of Henry's Fork;

clearly this bit of hearsay reveals confusion with Red Rock Creek, on the Montana side of the Divide. Skilled as they were in finding their way around in this jumble of geography, the mountain men were not letter perfect in their geographic ability to relate all main streams and tributary creeks. This, with the many changes of names that have occurred in the past century, limits the usefulness of the old maps and journals in tracing the routes of these early travelers.

The Indians' hunch about buffalo turned out to be sound. In one of those sheltered high valleys on the present Montana slope of the Divide they suddenly came upon a huge herd. Parker, miserably ill though he was, felt the excitement of the occasion as the men mounted their fleetest buffalo horses and rode furiously after the huge, shaggy animals. His prayers for the hunters' safety and success were well answered. They came back happy with reports of great slaughter among the bison, and numerous brown hulks could be seen dotting the prairie to corroborate this. The women who went out to begin the butchering found some sixty carcasses to be dressed out.

Rev. Parker's record of the following events still further confirms the fact that they were on the Montana side of the Divide. He says that the party, heavily laden with the rough cuts of buffalo meat, traveled only six hours before they struck the east branch of the Salmon at a point

Rev. Spaulding home built in 1838, from an oil painting by Rowen Lung Alcorn. It is believed that the first white family in Idaho Territory lived here for almost a decade.



where it was a stream "of considerable magnitude." Since they now saw the large, swift stream for the first time, and found it such a stream, clearly they were coming onto it from the side. The exact pass which they used in coming down onto the Lemhi cannot be determined. It could have been one of several east and northeast of Leadore. It would hardly have been above that place that the Lemhi would have been described as of considerable magnitude. They most certainly had not been coming down the Lemhi for the past day or so, which would have been the case had they been following the "all Idaho" route. Furthermore, a calculation of the total number of hours spent in travel between Cote's Defile and the mouth of the Lemhi would suggest that at this time they would be in the Leadore vicinity.

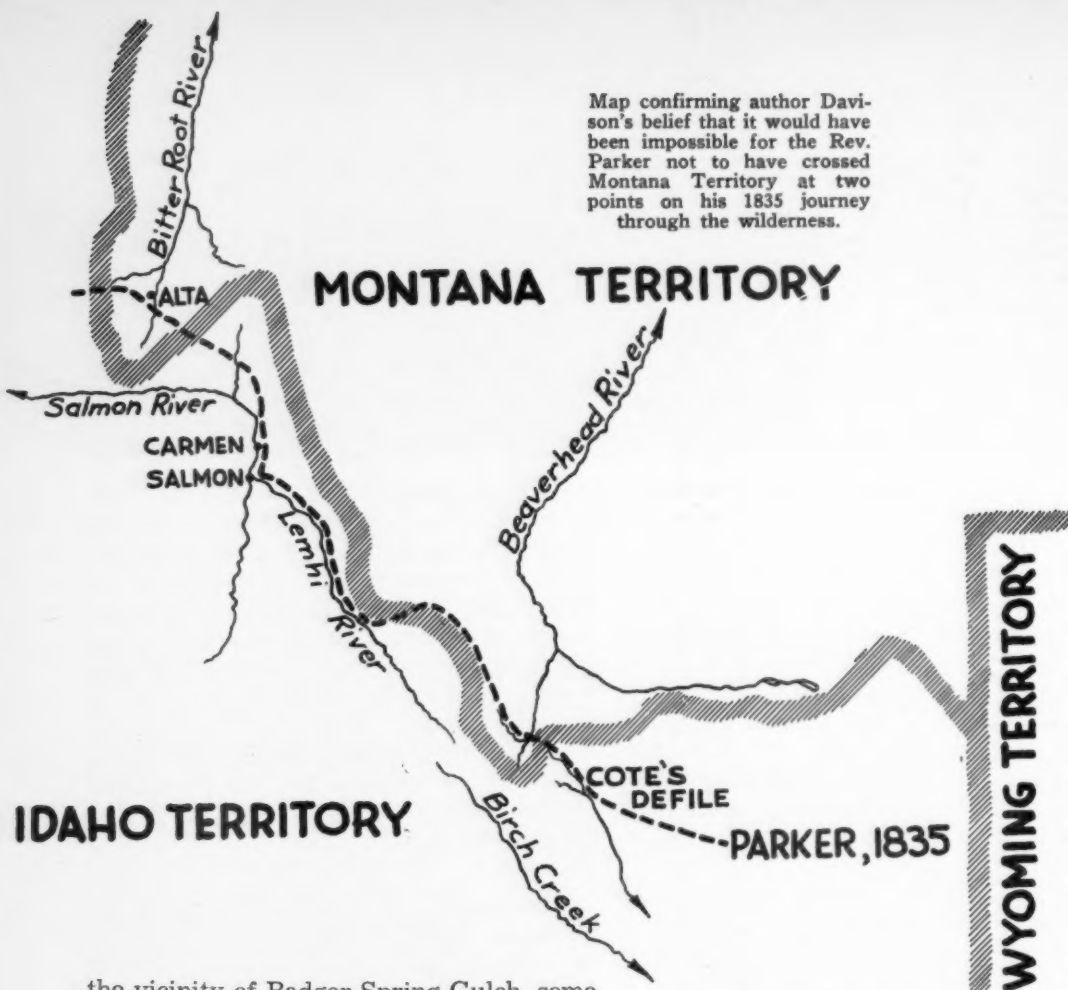
The party stayed in camp all the next day, the Indians drying their meat, Parker resting and bleeding himself in an effort to regain his health. On the following day most of the Indians departed to resume hunting, presumably going back into the Beaverhead country where they had left the buffalo herd. To these Flatheads, Parker gave assurance that other missionaries would come to them the following summer. He wrote that he gave one chief a Britannia Cup and "some writing paper, requesting that this last article might be presented to those missionaries whom I had encouraged him to expect next year."⁹ About 150 Indians remained, all or mostly Nez Percés under the leadership of Charle. The Reverend Parker accompanied them on down the Lemhi.

⁹ Parker, *op. cit.*, 102.

On September 15 they reached the main stream of the Salmon at the site of the present Idaho city of that name, and that night they camped five miles down the river, near the ruins of Bonneville's fort at the mouth of Carmen Creek. Shortly after starting out the next morning they noted a mineral spring which can still be identified today. Then, "... after passing down the river two hours in a northwest direction, we entered into the mountain, leaving Salmon River on our left ... it flowed into a dark chasm and we saw it no more."

Conventional accounts of the Reverend Parker's journey state that he followed the Salmon on down to its junction with the Snake. This makes no allowance for his clear statement that below Carmen he turned to the right, away from the river, and did not see it again. Also, this theory ignores the known difficulty of descending The-River-of-No-Return, whether by boat, on horseback or on foot. It is to be remembered that Captain William Clark, trying to get through that way against the advice of the Shoshones, came back scratched and tattered, to report that no man could penetrate that country. It is not easy to believe that this Indian band, including women and children, would casually make such a trip, or that the ailing preacher would accompany them. It is easier to believe that they followed their accustomed route across a small corner of Montana, along a path still marked on U. S. Forest Service maps as the "Nez Perce Trail."

Probably Parker's party did not follow the exact route of present Highway 93 but diverged slightly from the river in



the vicinity of Badger Spring Gulch, some five miles north of Carmen.¹⁰ Then the trail paralleled the river, keeping a mile or two to the east, but holding it in sight for awhile. Again, Parker's notes are not extensive, but he does report seeing the strangely formed towers along Boyle Creek. The next day's travel took them across Wagonhammer Gulch and on to that night's camp on the North Fork of the Salmon, at Roske Gulch. At this point they were intersecting the route of Highway 93, four miles up from North Fork, Idaho.

The missionary spent a restless night at this camp, worrying about his health and about their slow progress; he was sure that he would not survive if they were to spend many more days on these mountain trails. When morning came, he persuaded Charle to split the party, leaving the family groups and other less diligent travelers while Parker, the chief, and nine other men pressed on ahead. Turning westward

from the course of the present highway which leads to Lost Trail Pass, they followed up Spruce Hull Creek. Some time after noon they crossed the divide back again into present Montana. That night they camped on Mine Creek, high on the West Fork of the Bitter Root. The next day's travel, mostly downhill, was much faster than on previous days, although impeded by down timber. On that night, September 19, they made camp in a glade on West Creek, about three miles from the present old town of Alta. The place was well supplied with wood and water and grass, a good spot which was about to become an historic spot.

Even if the following day had not been the Sabbath, there would have been no travel, as Parker could not go on another day. He tells us that he could scarcely walk and that he again resorted to bleeding himself. But Sunday was not to go unobserved. Parker writes:



Left: Historical marker near Bannack Pass, west of Lemhi R. through which Parker probably returned to Idaho soil from the Montana side after traveling north from Cote's Defile. (See Footnote 8.) Below: Imaginary likeness of Marcus Whitman from statue at Witherspoon Bldg., Philadelphia.

I expressed the wish to the chief, that the day should be spent religiously, and that he should communicate to his men, as well as he was able, the scripture truths he had learned. This was faithfully done on his part, and he prayed with them with much apparent devotion . . . After they had closed their worship, I sang a hymn and prayed.¹¹

There is no record of an earlier church service within the present boundaries of Montana. Few since could have been as picturesque.

On Monday morning the missionary awoke feeling much better, and that day they made a good advance. Starting out, he could see a large mountain looming ahead, and he dared to hope that they would "depart in this instance from the common custom of the Indians, which is to pass over the highest parts of mountains, and to descend into the lowest valleys. But we passed the highest point, excepting one peak, which is nearly perpendicular, and rises like an immense castle or pyramid." It was nearly evening as they skirted Castle Rock on the Bitter Root Range, and crossed Nez Perce Pass into Idaho; a few miles further on, they camped again for the night.

Samuel Parker went on to a safe arrival at Walla Walla. He worked as a missionary for a time among the Indians along the Columbia River before he took ship for the Hawaiian Islands and around the

¹¹ This trail has been worked out by Mr. Glenn A. Thompson, Supervisor of the Salmon National Forest. His expert and careful comparison of the Parker text with the terrain has led to the identification of each night's camp site in this stage of the trip, and of landmarks which further establish Parker's route.

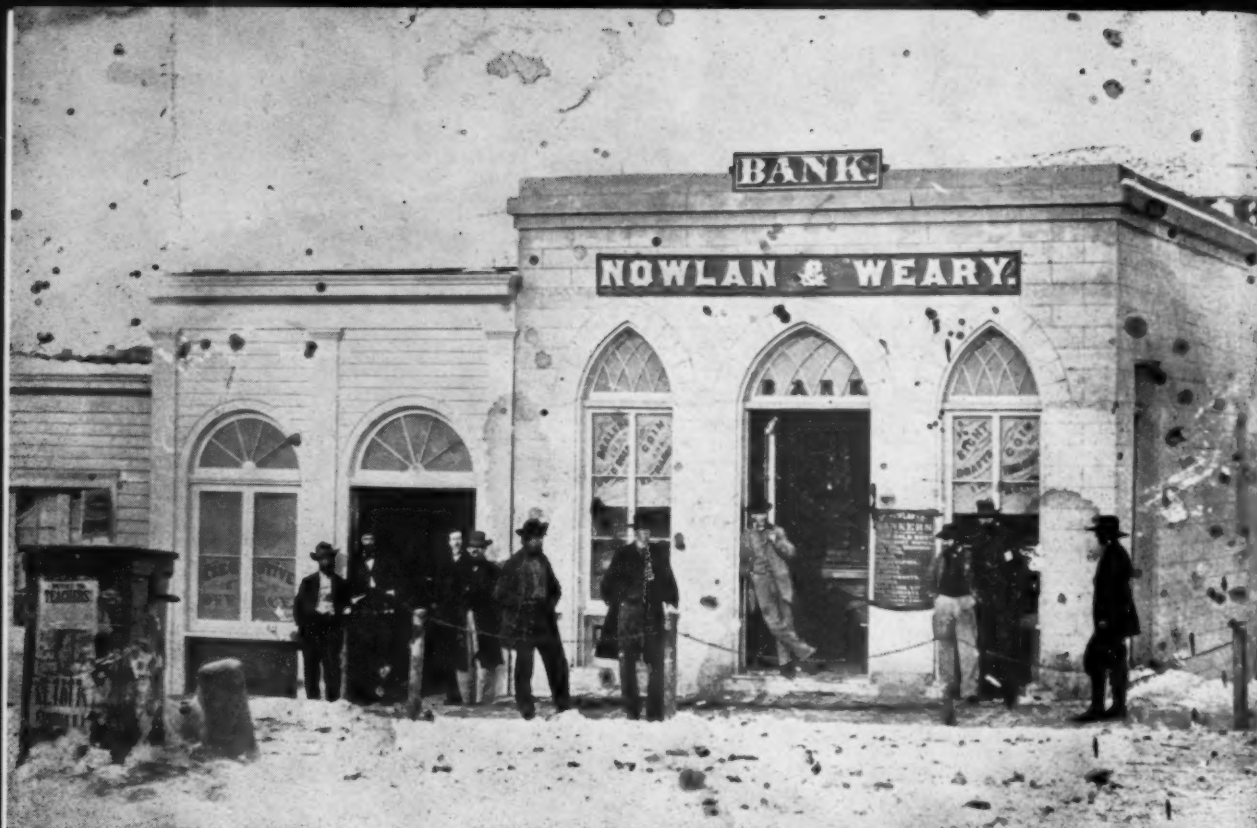
¹² Parker, *op. cit.*, 117.

¹³ Drury, *op. cit.*, 161.



Horn to the east coast and home. The effects of Parker's work among the Nez Perces were noted by Marcus Whitman and Henry H. Spalding when they arrived in 1836 to establish their missions. They remarked how well the Indians kept the Sabbath and were so faithful in their daily devotions.¹²

The Indians back in Montana were not to see another missionary for several years, but there were among them men who had taken their first steps in Christianity, who had attended the service in Cote's Defile and learned the prayers and commandments taught by this sickly but resolute man who was one of the very first Protestant missionaries in the Northern Rocky Mountain region.



Bank and early Territorial Offices in Virginia City, M.T. with famed Alder Gulch and the roaring gold camp opposite page.

FLOUR FAMINE IN ALDER GULCH, 1864

THE FIFTH issue of Montana Territory's first newspaper, the *Montana Post*, published every Saturday at bustling Virginia City, carried a warning that turned out to be prophetic. The prophecy was an understatement, though. The *Post* dated September 24, 1864, said this in the editorial column:

Warning to Housekeepers.—We deem it our duty to call the attention of housekeepers to the fact that there is every probability of high prices for food in the cold weather rapidly approaching. There is not such a quantity of flour in town as will suffice to meet the winter's consumption and the great influx of people renders the accumulation of provisions very unlikely. At the present rate the daily wants of the people are in excess of the daily arrivals. The communication with Salt Lake, during the months of January, February and March, though usually passable is still very precarious, as far as freight wagons are concerned, and we therefore consider it only a matter of common prudence, to lay in a stock of necessary articles before the supply is diminished or suspended by winter. It is useless tying the bag after the dust is stolen, and a word to the wise is sufficient.

Eighty years and four wars later, what the *Post* suggested was called "hoarding." If all its readers had done as it recommended, the booming gold camp would still have been hungry by spring. The three months of "precarious" wagon freighting turned out to be five months in which no wagons at all could get through the snow-clogged passes of the Rockies north of Corrine, Utah.

Before the winter was over, there was no more bread. Bread was really the staff of life in Montana's territorial gold camps. Alder Gulch produced none of its own food supply except a little wild game, and even potatoes had to be hauled from a few pioneer farms in the Bitterroot Valley, more than 200 miles away.

The busy mining camps along gold-rich Alder Gulch didn't guess how bad that

MONTANA the magazine of western history

Man could live by bread alone in the early gold camps. But what happened when the staff of life ran out?

By DOROTHY M. JOHNSON

winter was going to be. The present was exciting enough, without fretting about the future. Men lived from day to day in those hectic times.

Montana was a newly organized territory, no longer part of Idaho. It had its own governor, Sidney Edgerton. Election of state officers was coming in October. The new territory had a whopping 15,822 people in it—11,493 of them in Madison County, wherein was busy Alder Gulch.

Virginia City, new county seat, was going through the legal formalities of becoming an established town. Its mayor, Paris F. Pfouts, and its sheriff, Neil Howie, were both Vigilantes. Other Vigilantes naturally stepped into positions of leadership. Mortimer Lott and Charles Beehrer were election judges in nearby Nevada City; John Lott and A. B. Davis at Virginia. John Lott was appointed territorial auditor.

Travel conditions had improved immensely during the year and a half of Virginia's fabulous existence. There was

stage service to Salt Lake three times a week, and competition was so keen that the Overland had cut the fare to \$25. A. J. Oliver's line was even permitting passengers to include treasure in their 25 pounds of baggage without paying extra for it.

The gold camps were not yet peaceful by any means, but most of the road agent killers and thugs had been tracked down and executed. The good news of the hanging of Jem Kelly, who had only been whipped and banished by the Vigilantes, had just come in from the Snake River.

All mail was cut off east of Salt Lake, Montana's chief connection with the outside world, because of Indian outrages, especially in Kansas. Some news leaked in anyway. Sherman was at Atlanta. President Lincoln had called for a draft of half a million more men for the Union army, and there was criticism of the plan that permitted rich men to get out of military service by buying substitutes. (Of course some men, rich or poor, got out of it by





Left. Wells, Fargo and the Overland Mail offices in Virginia City, where work came to a halt in November due to Road Agent depredations. Below, next page, one of the important business corners at the time of the flour riot.

going to remote places like Virginia City, where no draft could reach them.)

As for flour, the wholesale price was down 50 cents on a 98-pound sack—St. Louis flour was \$26.50. Locally made butter was only \$1 a pound. Dirt cheap when measured by a pinch of gold dust.

Rockfellow and Dennee, produce merchants, usually quoted three different flour prices in the *Post*. "St. Louis" was shipped up the Missouri River by steamer to Fort Benton, then freighted by wagon down to Virginia City. "States" flour came overland. Flour milled by the energetic Mormons in Salt Lake was the cheapest, because it had to be freighted only 475 miles.

The political pot was boiling that fall. Early in October, the Union Party held a convention at Virginia City, with Mortimer Lott chairman, Neil Howie secretary, John Lott on the executive committee, A. B. Davis on the resolutions committee and a delegate to the first territorial convention—Vigilantes all of them. They passed resolutions calling for tax reform and opposed a law requiring that a man put in \$100 of work every year to hold his mining claim.

The first week in November, the Overland stopped its messenger and weekly express service to Salt Lake City because a new band of road agents was operating. The *Montana Post* demanded, "When will the time of safety come on our routes so a man can take his hard earnings home?

If nothing is done to bring these gents to rope, times will be tougher than they were last winter."

Another road agent had been executed in Bannack. Civilization was progressing; Nathan Gibson in Virginia City was commended for undertaking the construction of a building especially designed for a school house.

Rockfellow and Dennee reported the following week that the flour market was "somewhat excited with an upward tendency," but the wholesale price was only half a dollar higher. Mail was coming in regularly for a change, and the *Post* had received some eastern newspapers dated August 15—three months old but very welcome.

The November 19 *Post* headlined its big story, "Glorious News! Union Majorities in Every State But One! Hurrah for Lincoln!"

Gold was worth \$14.50 to \$15.50 an ounce in coin, \$32 to \$34 in treasury notes, known as Lincoln skins. There was plenty of gold, although not everybody had plenty of it, and flour was no higher than at the last report.

But the first hint of a coming shortage appeared in Rockfellow and Dennee's sedate weekly list of prices: Several wagon trains were due from Denver and Salt Lake. Due, but not yet overdue.

Nobody remotely worried yet about bread. There was talk around town about the coming auction sale of two ranches in

the estate of the late Joseph A. Slade, who had been executed by the Vigilantes several months before. The *Post* frowned editorially on the continuing tendency of citizens to shoot at one another, commenting, "The army of the Potomac is in constant need of fire eaters. Let duellists go there. Emphatically [sic] duelling is played out."

It wasn't, though. The very next week's paper—November 26—reported a duel between two Germans, who amidst fortunes in gold, quarreled over the sum of \$7.50. A thousand persons, including several ladies, met at Graveyard Hill below Nevada City to watch the affair, but Sheriff Howie arrested the principals and the crowd went home.

Now several flour trains were overdue, and the roads were reported bad. By the next week's paper, wagon transportation had entirely played out. St. Louis flour was \$28 (up \$1); states flour \$26 (up \$1); Salt Lake was still holding firm at \$25.

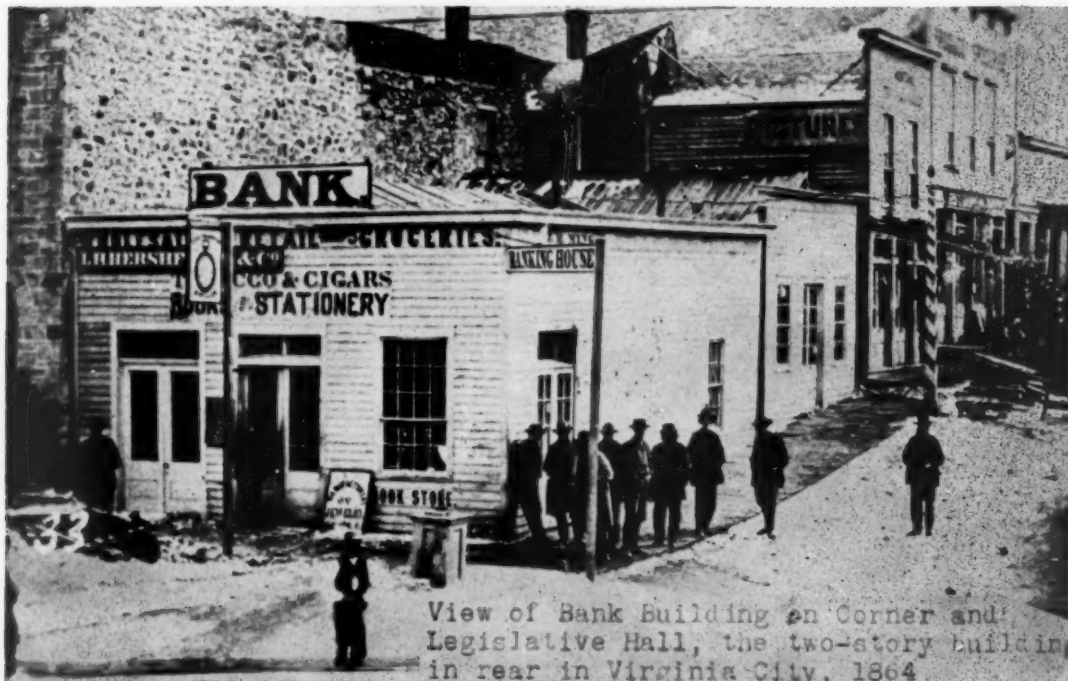
The December 10 paper carried an announcement that four Sisters of Charity, who wished "to impart the blessings of education to the young females of this Territory," would open a boarding school in the spring. If the editor got a chuckle

out of the location of the Academy of the Holy Family, "35 miles northwest of Hell Gate," he didn't say so.

The weather was bad—a foot of snow, hard wind, and a temperature drop to 18 below zero. The storm was fatal for one man, John Hamilton, one of five teamsters hired to drive from Salt Lake to Virginia City. When their wagons got snowed in, the wagon boss Edward Hardester callously fired them without any grub supply and they foolishly started on foot to Beaverhead. Hamilton froze to death that night.

Miners could not wash placer gold when streams were frozen, so they spent their time where they could keep warm. The *Post* for December 24 reported that two men had been shot in Hattie's saloon without any reasonable cause and commented sadly, "The place would be as quiet as Boston if the practice of carrying arms were abolished." The sentimental aspects of Christmas Eve received little notice in a calloused camp.

At "Something New," a hurdy-gurdy house, a man named Crow and another named Emerson, disagreed over the favors of Mrs. Crow. Each fired six shots at the other. They were lousy shots. Each was hit twice, but not fatally.



View of Bank Building on Corner and Legislative Hall, the two-story building in rear in Virginia City. 1864.



A Masonic parade during the great days of the gold camp.

But law had really come to Montana. Right after Christmas a large number of violent people found out the technical, legal names for their misdeeds when a grand jury brought various indictments for grand larceny, assault with a deadly weapon, challenge to fight a duel, adultery, mayhem, incest, attempt to commit murder, drawing and exhibiting deadly weapons, and bigamy.

Miners with even more time on their hands now, spent several hours of it in Leviathan Hall, roaring at a prize fight between Con Orem and Hugh O'Neil, durable pugilists who fought 185 rounds to a draw and divided the ring money.

By now, no more flour was expected. A majority of the wagon trains had corralled in winter quarters on the Snake River (a little more than 100 miles away, but on the wrong side of the Continental Divide). They were not expected to break the snow barrier before the latter part of February—and only then with the help of an early chinook!

That expectation proved optimistic. The stranded flour trains, blocked by snow drifts up to 40 feet deep, finally broke through to reach Alder Gulch in May.

In the meantime, winter dragged along. A. J. Oliver bravely announced in January that he would run sleighs to Salt Lake.

There was a general fight at the "Progressive," a hurdy-gurdy house; the police arrived and nobody was hurt much.

In February, the *Montana Post* ran out of white paper stock. For three issues it had to make do with brown. The price of flour held steady. But potatoes were now 18 cents a pound. There was no telegraphic news from the East because the wire was down for hundreds of miles. The telegraph had not yet come to Virginia City but news, like provisions, came in from Salt Lake.

The *Post* had some cheery news of its own in the March 11 issue: the Camp Douglas (Utah) *Vedette* had kindly sent up some white paper. How the paper got there, when vital flour could not, the editor didn't say. The *Post* would have stopped publishing if it hadn't come, because even the brown paper was all gone. Overland coaches were running (on runners, not wheels). But they could not carry freight. St. Louis flour now was \$27; states \$23; Salt Lake not quoted.

The Overland managed to deliver some mail after 20 days of fighting through the snow. A man was shot in a genteel fight at a "social party."

The following week, Rockfellow and Dennee warned that flour was "on the rampage"—St. Louis \$30; Salt Lake \$25; states not quoted.

Beginning with the April 1 issue, the *Post* now gladly printed on any color paper that was handy. The priceless files of this newspaper in the Montana State Historical Library are on blue, or a dull and dirty pink, for several weeks after that date. But the *Montana Post* was a good newspaper, and every literate person who could lay hands on a copy would have read it even if it hadn't been.

The April 1 issue reported real increases in the price of flour. St. Louis was up \$8; Salt Lake \$11; states \$15!

The paper came out on Saturday. The next day came the first riot in Nevada City. The editor scolded about it in his April 8 issue, without telling what really happened. Why should he? Everybody in town knew it already. Anyway, the whole thing was regrettable, and the *Post* couldn't take sides because both sides were wrong.

Flour had gone to more than \$40 a sack, in gold. A gang of "self-appointed regulators" bought flour by force from merchants who had it, at \$25 for Salt Lake and \$28 for states. They paid for it in clean dust, all but two sacks.

That was on Sunday. Angry meetings were held in Virginia City that day and Monday. A committee went to call on the merchants, pleading that the people were destitute. The committee "inflamed the crowd," said the *Post*, and the crowd, angry but unorganized, tried to take flour by force from Newbanks' Store.

Inside the store, barricaded behind sacks of precious flour were 23 men armed to the teeth. Outside was Sheriff Neil Howie, one of the bravest men who ever lived, but backed by 20 extra deputies. They would have been mowed down by rifle fire if Howie had not been as persuasive as he was courageous. He talked a huge, hungry mob out of its violent intentions.

The *Post*, now provoked by the whole sordid affair, scolded merchants in an editorial headed "Speculation." Then, objectively, they scolded the mob in another editorial called "Two Wrongs Never Make a Right."

Even before this, but reported in the same paper, was notice of a "bread riot" in Silver Bow City, precursor of storied Butte, home of the "richest hill on earth." Correspondence from that camp, dated



In the roaring '60's almost every other building housed a saloon, hurdy-gurdy or dance hall. Today Virginia's emporiums, such as Charley Bovey's reconstructed Bale of Hay Saloon, still carry an aura of the past.



Here are some of the business houses that participated in the flour riots, left, Housel & Andrews and Creighton, in adjoining structures of stone masonry.

March 18, told of trouble at Dorain's Store. Some "Irishmen" with no money took flour and then demanded canned oysters! Gourmets!

News from the states had leaked in. Somehow, from some source, the April 15 issue screamed: Richmond had been captured! Rockfellow and Dennee said flour was becoming very scarce, which everybody knew, and that consumers should economize, which all of them were doing already if they had any flour to economize with. News often is very obvious.

The *Post* gave the dramatic surrender of General Robert E. Lee just nine lines of type in its April 22 issue (on white paper for a change). The end of the Rebellion, way back East, was far less important to its readers than the drama of possible starvation right in Virginia City.

There was real excitement now. And this time the editor knew for certain which side he was on. In a long editorial he soundly scolded the flour "monopoly." Merchants had run the price of flour up to \$100 a sack. Some of them even boasted that they had a "right" to sell as they pleased!

Another fact that helped him take sides was that some "outstanding" citizens had taken part in the second flour riot. He commented, "Unlike the outbreak on a former occasion, which we consider was wholly unjustified, there were many respectable men in command and in the ranks."

Rockfellow and Dennee were staunchly on the side of the monopoly. Their weekly comment on prices included a remark that they knew of flour selling at \$5 a pound within a few hundred miles. The implication was that anything less was entirely reasonable.

This is what had happened, although the *Montana Post* prudently did not tell all these details:

A mob of exasperated miners, hungry for that staple of life, common bread, and worried not only for themselves but for the women and children of the camps, gathered for a stormy mass meeting. S. R. Blake, chairman, whipped the meeting into order long enough to bring sense out of chaos. He must have been a powerful disciplinarian—mad gold miners in the 1860's were not easy to calm down.

They could have swarmed through the town and taken the remaining flour. There would have been fighting, with dead men in the stores and in the streets. But there was no fight. A planned and successful invasion took place instead.

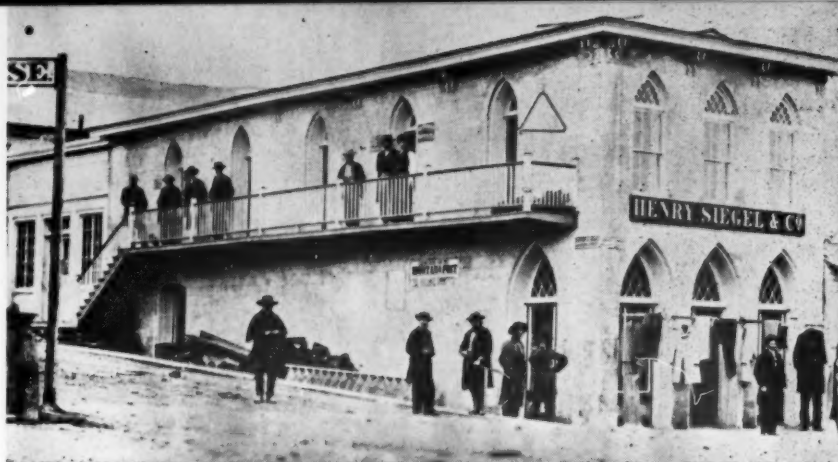
Tension had been mounting with the price of flour. On April 16, a 98-pound sack cost \$65. The next day the price jumped to \$75, then to \$90. People were so scared that some of them were actually paying that much. On the morning of April 18, the price reached \$1 a pound. At 11 o'clock came rumors that another bread riot was coming. And at noon it came—a remarkably disciplined riot.

Four hundred and eighty men marched into Virginia from Nevada, two miles away. Their leader rode a horse and carried a symbolic banner: an empty flour sack on a stick. They were divided into six companies, each with its captain. They were silent. Most of them did not even answer when by-standers cheered or cursed.

The six companies searched the town—stores, warehouses, restaurants, boarding houses, and even some haystacks. They collected 82 sacks of precious flour.

For each sack they handed out a kind of promissory note, printed up in advance at

Right is the fine store of Henry Siegel & Co., and below, near the fabulous diggings of Alder Gulch was the City Book Store and Idaho Billiard Parlor.



the *Montana Post*, promising to pay for the flour at the price it used to sell for: Salt Lake \$27, states \$30.

There was very little disorder. Three opportunists walked into a store on Content's Corner and started to take out flour by force, but Sheriff Neil Howie stopped them. The flour riot could not have been a surprise to Sheriff Howie. He must have been resigned to keeping order on the ragged fringes of it. He was quoted, years later, as making this speech:

"Gentlemen, this uprising is to get flour and pay a reasonable price for it; it is not to sack the town. The first man that steals from a store or saloon will be shot or

hanged. The same men that fought for law and order a few months ago are prepared to fight for it now."

The men who had fought for law and order were, of course, the Vigilantes. Which side were they on during the flour riot? On all three sides, probably—and there were three sides: people who had flour (some Vigilantes were storekeepers), and the marching searchers led by the flour committee, and volunteers to help Sheriff Howie keep the peace between the other two factions. The Vigilantes had been of one mind about hanging road agents, and they still were, but this was a new conflict in which their individual interests differed.





One Vigilante, Charlie Beehrer, boasted later that he bootlegged flour to a baker at \$70 a sack. As a reward, he was allowed to buy four loaves of bread for \$16.

There was some free-lance looting. A freighter named William Lambert was planning to leave for Salt Lake as soon as he could get through the mountains. Someone stole four of the eight sacks of flour he had stored for provisions on the journey. Later someone broke down the door of the storage place and took the remaining four sacks. Lambert not only could not set out for Salt Lake—he even had to pay \$10 for a new door.

Col. Wilbur Sanders' home was searched because rumor spread that he had flour. Mrs. Sanders invited the men to come in and try to find some. The house was invaded again while she was downtown trying to buy a little flour herself.

The searchers took 82 sacks back to Leviathan Hall and let the applicants line up. If a man could prove he had no flour, he was allowed to buy 18 pounds, more if he had a family. As the supply ran low, the ration was cut to 10 pounds. Then it ran out entirely.

A frequent contributor of sparkling vignettes for *MONTANA*, Miss Johnson will soon add another feather to her headdress when the University of Montana Press brings back N. P. Langford's classic, *VIGILANTE DAYS AND WAYS*. She will do the introduction for this republication of the exciting book which first appeared in 1890. We know it will add style and punch. Her third book, *RED MEN AND WHITE* will be published by Balantine, this spring.

Three other solid business houses, Russell & Co., Tootle, Leach & Co., and City Drug, all superbly housed against the winter chill in fine masonry buildings.

The flour committee paid back the former owners at the months-ago price.

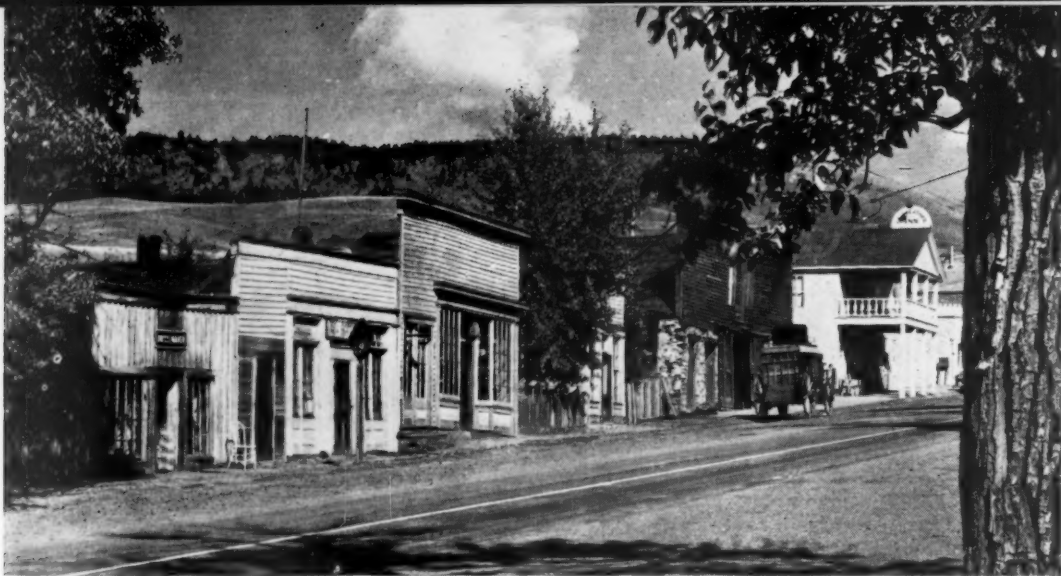
All this was very embarrassing to the authorities in a growing town that was trying hard to act civilized. Mayor Pfouts published a notice in the paper that he would proclaim martial law if there were any more disturbances. Sheriff Howie warned in print that male citizens were subject to call to disperse unlawful gatherings and that demonstrations would be dispersed at all costs. "All costs," of course, meant shooting. There were no more riots.

The next issue of the *Montana Post*, April 29, had such terrible news from the states that no local riot could have crowded it out anyway: President Lincoln had been assassinated! The news came in by horseback messenger from Bannack. This issue of the *Post* was on paper of dirty pink. But it was a mourning issue just the same, with heavy black rules between the columns of type.

There was one small item heralding good news: 14 sacks of flour had come in from the beleaguered wagon trains. It was time, because carefully used stores of rice, beans and hominy—poor substitutes for bread—were almost gone, too.

"J. Wilkes Booth Shot!" was the headline on the big national news in the May 6 issue. Locally, more flour had come in—64 sacks on Monday. The price quickly dropped to \$65. This flour had been unloaded three times to lighten the wagons for the straining oxen, floundering in snow where the crust had now melted. Men carried the sacks on their shoulders 200 yards at a stretch, then reloaded it.

On Thursday, 107 more sacks arrived. Someone had offered 20 cents a pound for the transportation of choice freight, not identified, just 22 miles across the Divide. But even a mule carrying mail hadn't got through.



If the paved street with white center marker was not present this might have been Virginia City in the 1860's. Actually it is part of the lower end of town, laboriously restored by State Senator Charles Bovey as a leading present day Montana tourist attraction.

The food situation at Silver Bow City was worse than at Alder Gulch. There was no flour, and miners were living on straight beef and coffee. Beef was cheap; coffee was \$1 a pound. Potatoes were 35 cents a pound and scarce; sugar and rice 75 cents. Early in May, the Silver Bow City correspondent reported, they had a two-foot snowfall and temperature of 35 below zero.

* * *

There was joyful weeping in the streets of Virginia City when the first flour trains slogged in, although the *Post* didn't say so. Women and children cried, and men hitched up and drove out along the road to meet the wagons.

The May 13 *Post* said lots of flour was arriving every day. The editor wrote gaily:

The road is now open to Salt Lake. Some parts do not much resemble the Macadamized causeways of the East, but the collective energy of the beef persuasion can now overcome the difficulties of the passage. The Hee Haw minstrels also are making the hills vocal with their wild psalmody, digging their toes into the gravel and making ground fast. May their ears never grow shorter.

The *Post's* paper shortage was still desperate. Even its colored stock was running so low that the May 27 issue was only half its normal size—a single unfolded sheet, printed on both sides.

By June 10, a supply of white paper came through and there was plenty of flour for everybody at the satisfactorily low price of \$15 a sack.

There was still plenty to worry about. Gold, which had been up to \$36 an ounce, was now worth only half that. Goods ordered from the states at the old price and due to come up the Missouri to Fort Benton, would have to be paid for with twice as much gold as had been expected. A dozen people had been killed by Indians near Fort Benton. Governor Edgerton was calling for 500 short-time volunteers to fight the Blackfeet. Two white men had been found scalped within 12 miles of Helena, and Indians had captured a girl of twelve.

But spring had come after the dreary winter, and there was bread again.

The story was told, years afterward, about one flour transaction that was not so profitable as expected. At the height of the flour excitement, a man sold his meek, long-suffering wife to an old admirer for \$100 gold and two sacks of flour. They were soon divorced and the lady quickly married her new owner. They settled down on a ranch, raised a family, and presumably lived happily ever after.

But her ex-husband hung on to his flour a little too long. He got only \$27 a sack for it when the market broke.

[THE END]

A CHRISTMAS STORY



FROM THE WEST

By Dick Randall

It was after the hard winter of 1886 that the "nesters" began to engulf Montana. The cattle barons had no use for nesters even though these homesteaders and ex-cowboys had as much right to the open ranges as the big cow outfits. They would locate near a water hole, having a piece of bottom land and a small meadow, usually several milk cows and often a large family of children.

The old-time cowboy was for the nester. It was probably his family that touched the soft spot of the cowboy. There was never a Christmas went by that line riders for the big outfits wouldn't pool their wages and make up a kitty for the nesters' families.

Our nearest store was at the little cow town of Junction City, twenty-five miles away. The cowboys would ride to town

for a little Christmas cheer and there was always one in the group we could trust with the bank roll and the Christmas shopping.

My partner for that winter's line-riding was a fellow by the name of June Buzzell, a good natured cowboy and a good pal to hole up with for the winter. We had three nesters' families in our circle rides. All had from two to four children. One of the boys from the home ranch brought our share of the Christmas stuff which we had already talked about dividing among the three families.

Well, one morning I said to June, "Let's saddle up our ponies and call on our nester friends. You know tonight is Christmas eve and let's start with Jim Neal."

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Jim had the largest family, four children. When we reached Jim's place we found him in the corral, tears running down his face.

"What's the trouble, Jim?" we asked.

"Well, my wife's pet cow 'Flossie' had a calf last night and it was dead. I am afraid to tell her," he replied.

"How long has it been dead?" June asked.

"Not long, it's still warm," Jim said.

I was doing some quick thinking. Finally I said, "June, you and Jim go and skin the calf out. Get all the skin from the legs and don't let the Mrs. know what you're doing. I am goin to take a ride up Cow Creek. Don't let the skin get cold, no matter what."

June had a hunch about what I reckoned to do. Before I ever got to the big alkali marsh on Cow Creek I heard a calf bawling. It had a squeaky voice like it was about the tail end of its bawling. I hurried "Poison" up, thinking it might be a lobo wolf that had the calf.

When I came into sight of the marsh there was an old mossy back cow bogged down to her sides in the center of that marsh and her baby bawling his head off and running around the marsh. I took down my rope and tied onto old bossy. The first cast just did make her head. But I had scared her baby who was high tailing it up the creek. It was a good thing I had another rope on my saddle. That little slick-ear gave me a hot chase until my loop settled on him.

Now I was up against it again. A rope on his mother and only one way to get the calf to his Ma. pack him on old Poison. I had never tried to go double on him. He was as good as gold on a rope. I boosted the little slick ear into the saddle seat and I slipped in back of him. Everything went fine until Little Slick tried to move. One of his sharp toes raked old Poison down the neck. Then things happened. Trying to stay up there and still hold that old cow's baby was one ride which I will always remember. There was no rider near to holler "Stay with him," or "Powder River!"

Well, Poison finally got the steam out of his system and we circled back to Little

This is no polished story by a gifted writer. But it is even more memorable as a true story written by a remarkable 89-year-old cowman, hunter and guide. Dick Randall is considered by the editors of THE DUDE RANCHER (in which this article first appeared, and to whom we are deeply grateful) to have been Montana's first dude rancher. Still ruddy-faced, stocky and jovial, he is today known and admired by many as a mint-edition hold-over from the raw days when a gruff exterior only thinly hid a heart as big as all outdoors—particularly at Christmas time. Mr. Randall now resides in the lovely city on the Yellowstone, Livingston, Montana.

Slick-ear's mother. Slipping off my horse I hogtied the little rascal so that I could get his mother out of the swamp. "And here, Poison, is where I get even with you," I thought.

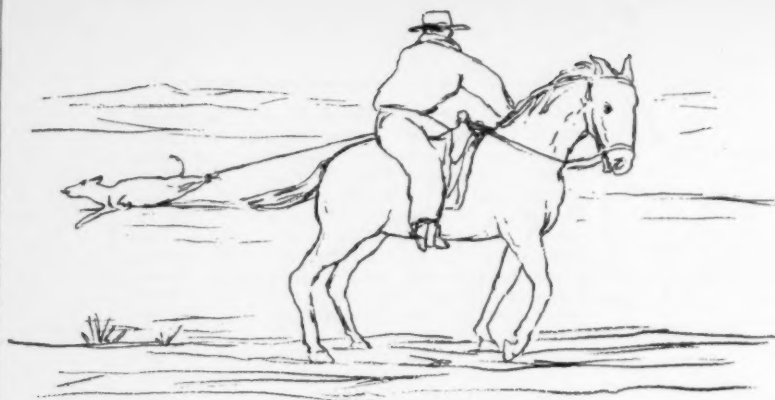
We have pulled cows out of swamps before this but this old moss back must have been locoed to get herself in the fix she was in. "This is going to be the hardest pull you ever made and I hope we don't break the rope, it happens to be my best one," I told Poison. The first pull the rope I had left on the old cow tightened around her horns. Poison pulled her head around to her side. We pulled from every angle and finally got her on her side. Then I knew Poison would get her out.

What a sorry sight she was, plastered with alkali mud until it was hard to tell her color. Now came that hard part to clean away that mud so that the little shaver could find his "Fountain of Youth."

Well he done a lot of bucking until I got what-makes-big-steers into his mouth. His little tail began to wiggle. His side began to roll out. It was worth the hard work to see his happy expression.

"Now, Pardner, I am going to choke you off. You're going to have another mother to milk out." I took the rope off the old mossback, knowing she would be on the prod when she got on her feet and that you usually get horns for such trouble. By this time Poison was sure tired and willing to carry double without fuss. We soon made it to the nester's place. It didn't take long to tie the hide from old Flossie's calf on the little live calf. The substitution worked.

Flossie liked to have run the calf down trying to tell him she was its mother. Old



Jim couldn't believe what he saw. He didn't let his wife come to the corral.

"Well, it is time for us to be going, boys, until after supper," said Jim.

"Yes, it is only five miles to our camp," June said. "See if you can't find a jack pine tree for Christmas and we will be back to help trim it," I added.

As we rode along back to camp our talk was of such nesters trying to make a living and fighting for their rights. As we reached the cabin and tied up our horses we were eager to open the sack the boys had brought from the home ranch. We took our list out. As June took the stuff out of the gunny sack I checked off a pair of mitts and cap for old Jim, warm stockings and overshoes for his wife, size 5. "Now the kids, their little girl, what would you say her age is?" June asked, his head poked in the sack. "It isn't on the calendar and we didn't get it on our list. Well about six years I reckon. Don't think you can miss any of their ages by far. They come along every full moon."

"Well, I'll hope Buck got the right sizes. He knows the family well."

"Here is a dress for a 10 year old that may be a little large, but she'll grow into it. A pair of mitts size 10. Overshoes, size 8. Well reckon that is about right for a gal. Now the boys, we will start at 5 and drop a number for each one, four, three, two size overshoes for boys. They can switch around until they find a pair they can wiggle into, just like cowboots. If you can get in 'em an soak 'em down, they'll fit. Now get the other sack, June, with 5 pounds of hard candy. We will leave half of that here to take to the other families.

Ten pounds of mixed nuts and ten more pounds of popcorn completed our gifts. We got flour sacks, divided the nuts and corn into them and were on our way like old Saint Nick himself.

As we rode along June opened up more than usual. He talked a lot about his hard life in North Dakota. He had never opened up like this. I guess the Christmas spirit caught him off guard. His father's and mother's families both was squatters. In the hard winter of '86-'87 they lost all their stock.

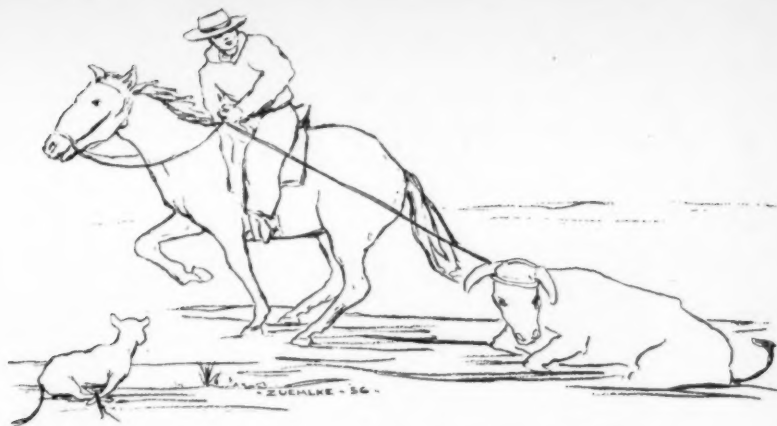
June wanted to know then about that old cow I pulled from the alkali bog. Well, she was a rack of bones, which meant the wolves and coyotes would be picking her bones and the little calf would have died before a week, I told him.

"Well," drawled June, "I think it was a kind act that you did. You saved the calf and it will sure mean a lot to Jim's wife, that poor old soul. She has had so little in this world, raising four children with so little to go on. I am anxious to see her when she sees that calf. Well, here we are, let's take the hide off before we go to the house."

In the corral stood old Flossie licking her new calf's hide and the Little Slicker was getting his bread basket full of good warm milk.

Jim had shooed the kids off to the back room or to bed. We got to work on the tree. June said he would cook the popcorn. He wanted me to fix the tree for he had never seen a Christmas tree hisself.

"Have you any syrup?" I asked. "If you have we'll make popcorn balls and tie them on the tree for decoration. June, hurry up with that popcorn!"



"She's a poppin pardner," came back quick from June Buzzell.

"Now, Mrs. Neal, have you got any cotton battin?" I asked. And Mrs. Neal rushed to get what she used to make quilts. I threw little patches all through the green tree. Jim nailed the tree to a small box and I covered the box with cotton battin, too. Mrs. Neal brought thread. As she made popcorn balls, I strung them for decoration. Jim cracked



a big dish of nuts. There was a big heapin' dish of candy, too. We needed some candles then, so Jim took them out of his lantern. We lit one and used it to stick them all to the board floor around the tree. The presents were then all put under the tree. The boys all together, so they could have the fun an' excitement of picking out their sizes. The little girl's stuff was put separate. The candles would let Santa read the packages, June said.

Finally we were all set to let the kids in. It was something I will always remember. Those poor kids just stood and stared. Finally they went for the candy and popcorn balls first. The little girl, Jane, went for the dress, while Mrs. Neal stood with her mouth open. Tears was running down her cheeks. Jim was spell bound.

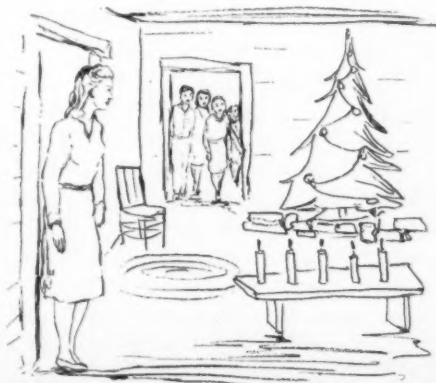
Mother Neal asked me to read something Jim had written on a piece of paper,

which said: "A nice bull calf in the corral getting his stomach full of Flossie's milk."

Well, she broke out of the door like a spooked antelope and ran to the corral. When she got back she rushed to Jim, threw her arms around him and gave him a long lingering kiss.

I think June and I both were kids again that day. It took so little to make a body happy in those days. It was hard to break away but finally we saddled up and rode to camp. Ed Hinsdale and Tom Spellman were our next calls for Christmas, but I think June and I talked all night about those kids, and the grateful look in Jim's eyes as he said, "Good night and God bless you, boys, I will never forget you both or the little slick-ear calf which made the Mrs. so happy. We will get our brand on him soon and he will no longer be a little orphan."

This is the way Christmas was celebrated back in the good years, when the cowboy was in his prime, and the cattle barons had our ranges stocked with southern cattle eatin' our precious God-given grass, but all was right with the world because there was peace on earth an' good will among men.



Last Roundup

By Mark H. Brown



Disjointed Gleanings from a Sweat-begrimed Diary

L. A. Huffman once titled a photograph "Old Sixteen." Today this is a picture, taken in a corral, of a horse branded "16." The picture is thought-provoking—not because there is anything unusual about it—but rather because of the question: WHY should Huffman have photographed this particular horse when there were thousands of cow horses on the range? But the words, "Old Sixteen," are the only record on the filing envelope and, unlike many of his better known photographs, there are no explanatory notes elsewhere. It represents an historical frustration, so typical of the period.

There is an unwritten law in military intelligence that no picture is worth filing away if there is not attached to it the identifying data of *who, what, when* and *where*. While this rule of thumb is not rigidly adhered to, the only unidentified pictures that are kept are those which may possibly—some day, somehow—be identified.

Photo files gathered purely for historical purposes present much the same problem as military files, with the exception that they are usually not pruned as ruthlessly and the questionable material discarded. Perhaps it is just as well. But the researcher who digs through hundreds of pictures about which little, if anything is known, soon develops a frustration of the most pronounced sort, for the chance that a picture of a person or of an event of a

bygone day can be identified in later years is extremely remote.

The cowboy of the high plains has been, and still is, a figure of considerable interest. The breadth of interest appears to be growing, rather than diminishing. A great deal (but not nearly enough) is known about the early-day cowman; and yet most of what is known has something of the flavor of a legend. Much of what has been written is reminiscence—particularly those details which involve matters pertaining to daily life. Some of the stories have been passed from one individual to another by word of mouth, unfortunately without the same meticulous care that most Indian legends received when handed down. Very few diaries were kept by working cowboys and real ranchers. Therefore any daily records, even though

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In the hot, dry summer of 1904, pioneer photographer L. A. Huffman rode with one of the last, great cattle roundups on the Northern Plains. L. A.'s sweaty notes and non-labeled photos evoked both pain and pleasure from his biographer, some 52 frustrating years later . . .

fragmentary, are worthy of particular note in reconstructing the oft-puzzling, detailed history of the old Western range.

For this reason alone, I am presenting here a portion of Huffman's diary of an extended trip with a roundup—one of the last really big roundups on the eastern plains of Montana. In 1904 Huffman kept these diary notes while traveling with the roundup outfit which together with the photographs he took provides a vivid and precise picture of a significant two-week period. Unfortunately some of the charm of these notes, scrawled by a tired and sweaty hand in the evening twilight, was lost when they were translated into neat type on a clean page. But what makes the diary notes really unique is the fact that they now provide invaluable sidelights on the long-missing photographic record which he made (or failed to make) at the same time. Pictures like "Hot Noon at a Roundup," "L V Bar Cook Making Bread," "Roping a Maverick," "XIT Pitching Camp," and others now take on deeper and additional meaning.

And, fortunately, there is an entry which—coupled with a story Huffman heard on the roundup and scribbled down later—brings meaning to the picture of Old Sixteen. He was a "stampeder" bronc, who made a jump over a cutbank 43½ feet high, with a sheepherder on board and came out without a scratch.* Here's what else the Huffman diary reveals along with the photographic identification so personally satisfying to me. The punctuation, style and spelling are his own:

Crow Rock Mont (Dawson Co) July 17th (04) Arrived at noon camp 1 mile below Cooks ranch at 11-30 AM leaving McRaes 21 mile ranch (old "stone shack") at 6-50 AM. the distance is fully 26 miles but a fine road. Guy Truscott and I are looking for the roundup. We passed the remains of beeves

they used on this creek 3 days ago. leaving Miles City at 3-30 PM yesterday —(16th) we have passed but two ranches, stone shack and Cooks 47 miles with 35 to travel to the nearest one— We surprised an antelope doe—ear'y this morning on Grimes Creek—she had kids hid in the tall grass nearby. Saw 50 old sage hens in one bunch and 30 young—they have weaned the chicks already. Made view of Crow Rock

July 18th 04 Sun rises 4-20 Yesterday we left Crow Rock at 3 PM and drove to Mr. Hedstroms on the head of "Timber Creek" which has not changed much in 26 years. We missed the roundup by one day and pulled back to the mouth of Crow Rock where we camped for the night with my old friend Wm Stiller who like myself had not been here since the buffalo days. We had young sage chickens for our supper. During the drive to Timber Creek we came close to a wreck—rattler in the trail made the little gray bolt. Here is a rider from the roundup they work ten miles down Little Dry today. barring accidents we dine with them at noon today. All well. Guy is writing a boys journal of the trip. dine with LU —.

10:35A.M. 19th We are at the Hat X wagon. The drive is large today and the roundup ground near camp. The herd is large and watering just below camp on the Big Dry 15 miles below mouth of Little Dry. Mr. Wells and wife and 2 children came out to visit the wagon and brot the boys new peas — string beans lettuce which is being prepared for dinner. Mr. W. is manager for the Hat. He told me a snake story today that skunks my best one in a walk. He was at the Le Vally ranch 12 miles

When THE FRONTIER YEARS, co-authored by Mark Brown appeared, we thought it superb. Now, BEFORE BARBED WIRE (to be reviewed next issue) exhausts our superlatives. Yet there is more treat in store, for Mr. Brown turned out this piece while researching here for a third volume dealing with the Yellowstone River country, probably for publication late this year.

*This story, too long to be repeated here, may be found in *Before Barbed Wire*, pp. 196-198, along with these diary notes.



above here on Timber Creek about the — of — with two Hat men. Mr. Le Vally told of a rattlesnake den in their pasture a half mile from the ranch—they got a pole, fastened a rake to the end of it and armed with quirts and clubs went out to make war on the snakes. The dens are in volcanic rocks on a little butte. Thousands of snakes were in sight in a little depression sunning themselves. They raked and mauled until they were all nauseated with the stench arising. counted up 146 and all agree enough excaped to fill the bed of this mess wagon. I am going to investigate on our return if I can rustle some boots and sheet iron leggins.

July 20th 04 Camped with the XIT boys near the Hat ranch which is on Timber Creek near the Dry. Got bogged in the deep crossing near mouth of Timber this morning. Charley Morris, Bob Fudge and Johnnie Woodruff happened along and found me in the water getting the team out after unhooking them. The boys hooked on the hind ex [axle] with 3 lariats to their saddle horns and made 3 or 4 hard pulls breaking some good grass ropes before we got it out. On return to camp I found the bed wagon—Hat X—4 mules bogged at this same hole the pictures will tell the story.

21st We breakfasted by the firelight 3-30 and broke camp at 4 moving down to Nelson Creek. The drive is in early—about 6000 cattle on the ground and in the herds. The winter must have

been tough—branded only about 130 calves yesterday and today. The CK boys turned over their mess wagon but no body killed—steep rocky hill.

21 camped with LU bar. This morning Homer Lewis saddled his private "Sorrel Top"—sorrel pitched with the saddle went off a bank into the Dry 25 feet before turning completely over. crossed the bar and a CK boy roped him he pitched on the rope and the boy took a fall out of him breaking his near fore leg. Poor Sorrel he was beautiful. Homer looked pretty sad when he drew the gun to put him out. Heres a little ranch and a garden. lettus is good without mayonnace. Last night Butch held forth on his travels in India—the Nigger question and the crabs. Butch has been cooking and trying to wean the boys from their vices for 25 years and the old man is as sunny and good tempered as one could wish. And he CAN cook! Our supper last night was stewed corn, steak, sour dough biscuits, hot apple sauce and coffee! Here we are 5 miles down and in camp with The Hat again at 7-20. My team are gaining on grass alone and I can almost hook them up without help.

July 22nd and 3-30 am We breakfasted by firelight. too hot to eat the horses are in and we will be off before the sun rises.

23rd

Camped with the CK boys. Roundup on Sand opposite Maguire Creek 110 in

shade and hot wind too hot for write. Water getting worse — rain needed very much though grass is fine.

24th Hotter today than yesterday. Roundup large [sic] over. 100 calves to brand XIT threw back an immense herd this morning at daylight. made 18 pictures today.

Monday 25th July We are 10 miles from the big Mo [Missouri] and making the last camp on the sand flats of the Big Dry. Here are the big sand ridges in which cottonwood trees are buried so deep that only the tops are to be seen—trunks 30 ft high and 18" or 20" in diameter having formed roots the entire length so slowly have they been embedded. some in like manner have been uncovered showing natures efforts to clothe roots with bark again.

Tuesday 26th

7 to 10 m [thousand] cattle in three great herds. We moved to Bear Creek making a dry camp at sundown. It was beautiful looking from our camp 4 miles from the Big Dry, horses and cattle moving as far as the eye could reach.

Wednesday 27th

Rounded up Bear Creek, fine grass, clear sky, no mosquitoes or flies up here. Bathed and washed our clothes in the rain water holes and as I write we are pitching a dry camp where we can look over into the breaks of Hungry Creek.

Thursday 28th

In camp on Hungry Creek. CK, Hat X & XIT all near together, CK immense herd. 10 miles from Mo [Missouri River] 15 miles west of CK ranch. It has been a hard day but the pictures paid for the extra effort saw 4 men thrown today one remoota [remuda] stampeeded. Neverslip and Loose Twist [two cowboys] ran a big CK steer off a 25 ft cut—killed the steer but men

and horses unharmed—picture I am writing in the dark too tired to do anything more—heres for the sleeps or would have been had not the wind rose and made us hustle to tighten pegs and guys. The thunder and lightening grew more intense all night long and at 4 oclock this morning the height of the storm broke upon us from the north. it turned inky black. every tent but our little tepee went flat. the roaring, bel-lowing and trampling with shouting and cursing went on for an hour when it cleared. The herds must have mixed which would mean lots of hard work for the tired boys. Cyclone Ed had a bucket of stewed raisins in his bed. The . . . cook's table went down in the ruck. 6² 8² [6½ x 8½] camera is badly smashed. It's glue and nails for the forenoon.

Friday 29th The circle took in the Mo bottoms and Hungry Creek which furnishes the great "general" for the year. the calf branding has been very light, 30 to 70 a day. the largest about 130. The CK ought to have branded from 50 to 250—this tells the story of last winter losses.

Saturday 30th

We drove from Hungry back to Bear Creek where the final working of the big herd is going on. There are about 60 riders and every man is helping at cutting or holding—anxious to start home with his cattle.

And so the roundup of 1904 in the "Big Open" came to a close. Four short years later these big outfits began to ship their cattle and close out their holdings. The honyoker was well along on his mission to turn the prairie sod upside down. The cattleman and the farmer simply could not exist together. The time was near when all that would remain of the last chuck-wagon days were exciting memories.



IRRESOLVABLE ENIGMA?

By Robert W. Mardock



THE COMING OF THE SETTLERS. ARE THEY FRIENDS OR ENEMIES?

Strange Concepts of the American Indian Since the Civil War.

The Indian problem of the post-Civil War era has been greatly complicated by the white man's confused beliefs regarding his red brother. Satisfactory decisions were virtually impossible when the policy makers, as well as the nation at large, could not agree as to the nature and character of the American aboriginals. "The question of chief importance . . .," observed *Harper's* for May, 1870, "is . . . what are they, and what is to be their destiny?" Were they capable of civilization, or were they anachronisms that must be exterminated? Thus contemporary concepts of the Indians were determining factors, not only with respect to government-Indian relations, but to the very survival of the red race itself; and many of these still persist today.

The complexity of the Indian mind, soul, and culture baffled even the best in-

formed Americans for decades. As early as 1826, James Fenimore Cooper, whose "noble savages" did much to influence 19th century concepts, pointed out that "few men exhibit greater diversity, or . . . greater anti-thesis of character, than the native warrior of North America." Fifteen years later, George Catlin, student and artist of the Northern Plains Indian tribes, expressed his conviction that the "Indian's misfortune has consisted chiefly in our ignorance of their true native character . . ." In 1878, Indian reform advocate Elwell Otis observed that the paradoxical traits of the Indian made him a "psychological and metaphysical enigma. . . ."

A graduate of Friends, Wichita and Colorado Universities, Texas-born Bob Mardock is now working on his Ph.D. in American History at Colorado. This, his first published work for us, indicates that more will be heard from him later. He is currently hard at work on a book-length work dealing with this perplexing subject.

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By the decade preceding the Civil War, many of our great Indian tribes had been moved or had migrated west of the Mississippi. By 1865, earlier bloodshed and hatred, softening into legends, prompted Constance Woolson, in her gentle novel, *Anne* (1882), to observe that "New England, having long ago chased out . . . and exterminated all her own Indians, had become peaceful and pious. . . ."

The farther one lived from the frontier, it seemed, the greater was the esteem for the red man. The widespread familiarity with Cooper's writings and the general acceptance of the "noble savage" concept tended to strengthen sympathy for Indians in the Eastern states. New England, particularly, was to see the rapid growth of countless humanitarian groups which would have an influential voice in the reform of Indian policy in the 1880's and which also would confuse and magnify the issue.

But if the Eastern viewpoint tended to be "peaceful and pious," overly romantic, and, perhaps in some instances, naively sympathetic, the West approached an opposite extreme. On the Western frontier the concept of the noble savage vanished. The association of nobleness with Indians was inconceivable to our border settlers. The "savage" label was more easily and almost totally accepted. To the average Westerner, moreover, this term did not only imply just a primitive, natural man; his savages were always scandalously cunning, fierce, and brutal "red devils."

Such "wild and warlike" Indians were both feared and hated. Even the few "tame and peaceful" red men, who hung

around army posts and the border settlements, or were confined to reservations, were considered worthless and lazy and generally were held in utter contempt. This attitude led to complete disregard of moral scruples by many whites as far as treatment of the Indian was concerned.

At one time the Colorado House of Representatives seriously considered a bill offering rewards for "the Destruction of Indians and Skunks,"¹ a legislator's expression of a prevalent frontier concept that the "only good Indian was a dead Indian." The average Westerner also expressed vigorous contempt for the efforts of all Eastern humanitarians, even the temperate and objective ones. On the frontier, army control, or better yet *extermination*, was considered the right way out of the unpleasant dilemma. A white ferryman, living near the Brule Sioux Agency in South Dakota, complained that "them Injuns Rights folks . . . means all right, but they don't know . . . I jist wish they'd come out here an' stay awhile. They'd change their idees 'bout how ter manage the Injun, almight quick."²

In Virginia City, M. T., the *Montana Post* declared: "It is high time the sickly sentimentalism about humane treatment and conciliatory measures should be consigned to novel writers, and if the Indians continue their barbarities, wipe them out."³ With Eastern residents and the

¹ Loring B. Priest, *Uncle Sam's Stepchildren* (New Brunswick, 1942), 89.

² W. Fletcher Johnson, *Life of Sitting Bull* (1891), 364-365.

³ Robert G. Athern, *William Tecumseh Sherman and the Settlement of the West* (Norman, 1956), 118.





In contrast to the documentary illustrations of Charles M. Russell on the preceding two pages, those that appear here and through page 41, convey the opposite impression—the Indian was a bloodthirsty savage rather than “nature’s nobleman.”

Western settler holding such diverse views, disagreement over government Indian policy was almost inevitable.

The westward movement created the “Indian Problem”—a state of mind that was, first and foremost, a struggle for possession of the nation’s last unsettled or unclaimed natural resources. It mattered little whether such resources meant hereditary hunting grounds and buffalo—or mineral wealth, grazing and farm lands. In either case undisputed control of the land was basic.

Following the Civil War, the border regions of the trans-Mississippi West swarmed with land-hungry Easterners. For the first time they saw the “wild tribes” of the Plains as a prime barrier to their material aspirations. These frontier contacts meant new viewpoints, which in turn gave rise to new concepts of the Indian; a fact which led the *Overland Monthly* to observe that “settlers from the East . . . who have always regarded the Indian, at a distance, with kindness, soon fall in with the prevailing (frontier) sentiment.” On the other hand the Eastern groups, far removed from frontier emotional influences, were successful in reconciling their highminded ideals with actual practice. It was their plans for “civilizing” the Indians that inspired President Grant’s “Peace Policy,” with its emphasis on religion and education.

In the newspapers of the post-Civil War era, sensationalism was almost inseparable from descriptions of Indian affairs. Indian atrocities and border warfare crowded other less dramatic accounts from the front pages. The apprehensions and viewpoints of our frontier areas were strongly reflected in Eastern newspapers. Exaggerated dispatches from the West, incredibly wild and inaccurate when reporting Indian “massacres” and depredations, were commonly printed without ever questioning their accuracy. The frontier “Red Devil” concept dominated the nation’s press with few exceptions.

The one-sided, biased reporting of the great metropolitan and all Western newspapers did not escape criticism. Indian-rights advocates vigorously denounced such propaganda, fearing a revival of anti-Indian feeling in the East and the loss of support for reform. Colonel Richard I. Dodge insisted that the press was much to blame for the frontier’s exaggerated feeling against all Indians. Senator Henry L. Dawes of Massachusetts, Chairman of the Commission on Indian Affairs, maintained that the public mind had been perverted into blaming the government for almost total mismanagement of Indian affairs “by an army of newspaper men out in the Indian country.”

The viewpoints of the popular national periodicals correlated closely with news-

paper concepts of the Indian. In the *Overland Monthly* for October, 1871, Frances F. Victor observed that while the Indian soul "is undeveloped . . . his animal passions . . . exist in full force, together with the sagacity to employ them for mischief." In 1866, a *Harper's Weekly* reporter complained of a million dollars in losses suffered by the Overland Stage Company "in consequence of raids by 'the noble red men of the forest.'" A decade later, the same publication observed that the Indian was a "simple-minded aboriginal" and a "god-less heathen" who would always be as unchanged in his faith as in his savage, bloodthirsty habits.

Praise of the Western red man at this time was rare, even in the most conservative journals. A correspondent for *Harper's Magazine*, who accompanied General W. S. Hancock's Kansas Expedition of 1867, reported on the "perfidy and devilishness" of the Plains Indian. Indian Commissioner Francis Walker, in the *North American Review* (April, 1873), trying to appear neutral, stated that the Indian, after having his "stupendous conceit, with its glamour of savage pomp and glory, rudely dispelled" by military power, would become commonplace, simple and ambitionless. Yet in the *Review* for March 1879, General Nelson Miles finally criticized the commonly stated belief that all Western Indians were a "treacherous and bloodthirsty race," a daring bit of statesmanship for a military man!

By the mid-80's, however, the humanitarian viewpoint had become the dominant one in most U. S. periodicals. The *Living Age* for May, 1885, praised the red man's capabilities for civilization and condemned those patrons of the border who were blackening his character. Similar ideas were expressed in the *Overland Monthly* and *New Englander* magazines. In 1889, *Science* maintained that the popular concept of the Indian as a wandering, naked savage, whose chief object of existence was to enslave, torture, or kill was totally false; that in actuality he had progressed far beyond the lowest states of savagery and was nearing the second stage of progress—barbarism!



Yet dime novel Indians of the 1860's were close copies of Cooper's "most noble red men." They were all gentlemen savages—even though they did indulge in traditional scalping and torturing—a paleface damsel's honor being "as safe as if she were in a convent." The frontiersmen referred to the Indians merely as "imps" or at worst, "varmints." At first such a severe term as "devils" seldom was used, because it smacked too much of profanity.⁴

By the late 1870's and during the early 1880's, competition apparently forced American writers to include more action and exaggeration in their Wild West stories. According to the publisher of the Beadle and Adams Company, ". . . we had to kill a few more Indians than we used to. . . ." The redskins had now become more bloodthirsty and treacherous and were called "red devils" instead of "imps."⁵ But instead of conforming to the humanitarian viewpoints, the Savage Indian was ignominiously dropped in the mid-80's when most of the fighting warriors were finally corralled on dreary reservations.

Americanism, nationalism, and glorification of the frontier were basic ideologies of the dime novel. The subjugation of the Indian became a vehicle for such expressions. Within this framework, the dime novel persisted in portraying the Indian as a stubborn, treacherous, and vindictive

⁴ Edmund Pearson, *Dime Novel* (Boston, 1929), 37, 63-68, 91.

⁵ Albert Johannsen, *House of Beadle and Adams*, 2 vols., II (Norman, 1950), 61-62.



barbarian.⁶ His future was predestined: to be conquered and exterminated by a superior race. It was that simple!

In the literary field, the divergence between East and West frequently deteriorated to verbal violence. The popularity of the "new Western realism" provided an opportune time to tear apart the idealized *beau savage* of Cooper, Catlin, and Longfellow. Many Western writers proceeded to do just that.

Contact with the wild savage of the Frontier West motivated many individuals of an humanitarian bent to reevaluate romantic concepts, only to find themselves on the opposite side of the fence; perhaps even to the point of accepting the premise that extermination was the only practicable solution to the Indian problem. There seemed to be no middle ground where an Indian was concerned.

As a voluntary member of a Minnesota Sioux tribe, George P. Belden (*Belden, the White Chief*, Cincinnati, 1872) wrote that at last he had found a tribe "such as Cooper had represented, and Longfellow characterized in *Hiawatha*." But the Indian outbreaks during the Civil War soon induced Belden to switch from squaw man to Indian fighter. In this new role of Nebraska cavalryman, he bitterly insisted

that the redskin was a "greasy mess of brutality (even though) known down east as a 'noble red man.'"

Samuel Clemens, during his journey to the Far West in the 1860's, experienced a similar change in his earlier beliefs. In *Roughing It* (Hartford, 1874), he depicted the Gosiute Indians of Nevada as a "silent, sneaking, treacherous looking race; taking note of everything, covertly, like all the other 'Noble Red Men' that we (do not) read about. . . ." The shock and disillusionment experienced by Clemens at the sight of these natives in their wild state, led the former "Indian worshiper" to conclude that he had been overestimating the Red Man "while viewing him through the mellow moonshine of romance . . ."

Other Western travelers became just as forthrightly indignant as did Mark Twain. Samuel Bowles in *Our New West* (New York, 1869), declared that the Indian was not the equal of the white man; that he should be treated as an ignorant, undeveloped child; and that it was his destiny to die since he was unable to ever mount to white civilization. An even stronger indictment was brought against the Plains

⁶ Merle Curti, "Dime Novels and the American Tradition," *Yale Review*, XXVI (1937), 761.



The book, BELDEN, *THE WHITE CHIEF* in 1872 carried the illustration at left, titled "Marauding, Murdering Red Devils"; and one of the popular national periodicals of the day published the harrowing, "murder of the Rev. Marcus Whitman," above. Suc's art could not help but inflame the public mind.

Indians by J. H. Beadle. This writer declared that torturing was a "pastime of the noble red man," who was "moved by a blind instinct to plunder and kill." However, Beadle saw a ray of hope for the Cherokees, since these "gentle savages" had taken the white man's road, the last (and only) hope of the otherwise doomed race.⁷

By the early 1880's, realization that all remaining "wild" tribes of the West were fast disintegrating, forced many Easterners to again reevaluate the prevailing "noble savage" concept. Now, more than ever, the Indian emerged as innocent victims of the white man's greed. It was time that justice and fair dealing should replace the "coldness, sordid selfishness, and cruelty which the native race has endured in all years of the past." The concept of a wronged and helpless red man, pleading for mercy as he faced extermination, was perfectly conceived to fire humanitarian hearts and influence most neutral persons.

This reawakening was largely inspired by the writings of reformers such as Helen Hunt Jackson, whose *A Century of Dishonor* (1881) passionately told of the most sordid episodes in our relationship with the Indian. This classic of the reform movement was unabashed propaganda directed toward radical change in government Indian policy. Its biased, one-sided

presentation—as far from the truth as the opposite side—made it all the more effective as a propaganda weapon.

Typical of the humanitarian literature of this decade was George E. Foster's *Se-Quo-Yah*, published by the Indian Rights Association in 1882. Foster maintained that "it has been too much our custom to look at all Indians as savages, while in fact, there is much concerning them that is noble and even worthy of being imitated by a white brother." Foster's recognition that something of value could be found in the Indian culture was a radical departure from some opinion of the 1860's and 70's. The theme of white-brotherhood-with-the-noble-red-man not only inspired the advocates of assimilation, but played a part in raising the general popular concept of the Indian to a loftier plane than it had been since the 18th century.

Yet, again, many Western writings of the 1880's proved to be the products of reaction to the too, too sentimental viewpoint. Colonel Frank Triplett in his *Conquering the Wilderness* (Chicago, 1883) asserted that misinformed apologists in the East "mourn the Indian's banishment for there they are known only as the godlike creatures of Cooper's pages, and not as the remorseless fiends, whose lust and brutality have marked the West with trails of blood and agony . . ." Colonel Triplett



Contrast the art of Charley Russell, who knew the Red Man when he was a Nobleman of the Plains, to the speedy deterioration of the Indian under the Indian Service, as pictured here in the sordid early photographic documentation of a field ration issue to captive Indians.

maintained that protests against the extinction of the savage were as appropriate to a Westerner, as "lament for extirpation of the dreaded rattlesnake." To him, the Indian was, with rare exceptions, "devoid of any traits of humanity and magnanimity, and thoroughly imbued with the passion for war and bloodshed . . . a brutal savage, a murdering marauder . . ."

By the mid-80's, attempts at more objective accounts were appearing frequently, although the Indian was still considered inferior to the white race. Colonel Richard Dodge, in his personal study of the Plains Indian, described the latter as having the "ordinary good and bad qualities of the mere animal, modified to some extent by reason."⁸ Colonel Dodge's analysis was in agreement with the latest scientific view of the day which classified the Indian as "a primitive man but in an early stage of evolutionary development." The historian, Hubert H. Bancroft, based his more intelligent concept of the red race on the theory of evolution. He maintained that the difference between cultured and primitive man lay simply in the fact

that one had a few centuries head start on the other in the race toward progress. He believed that the only way to understand a "lower order of beings," such as the Indian, was through the medium of the civilized man's lower faculties. However, savages should be regarded as "one of common humanity with ourselves and ancestors perhaps of people higher in the scale of being and intellectuality than the world has yet seen."⁹

Among all Americans in the nation at large, the conflict between viewpoints apparently stemmed from three basic factors: space, time, and cultural differences. Geographically, the frontier population of the West was too close to the Indian to obtain an unbiased concept. The East on the other hand, was somewhat remote and sheltered to formulate objective judgment. And the people of both areas were too

⁸ J. H. Beadle, *The Undeveloped West* (Philadelphia, 1873), 84-85, 430.

⁹ Richard I. Dodge, *Our Wild Indians* (Hartford, 1882), 650.

¹⁰ Hubert Howe Bancroft, *The Wild Tribes*, Vol. I of *The Native Races* (San Francisco, 1886), 26.

E. S. Paxson was an Indian - fighter - scout-turned-artist. He believed that the only good Indians were dead ones, and his bias showed in later years when he painted his version of the "Custer Massacre."



close, in time, to acquire a balanced perspective. The Indian was a vital and pressing problem, a problem which the short-sighted, expedient, and fumbling methods of a crowded century had so far been unable to fully understand, let alone solve. Finally, the contact of two radically different cultures, each convinced of its own intrinsic superiority; and each unable, with few exceptions, to completely adapt itself speedily to the other, made peaceful acculturation difficult. The conflict of two codes with different concepts of right and wrong led to the widespread belief that the Indian character was good only insofar as it coincided with the mores and customs of the white race.

This conflict was intelligently pointed out, in 1891, by W. Fletcher Johnson. He wrote that when future years had "translated passion into philosophy, a more discerning judgment may record in other terms these same events. For this day and this generation we can only tell the story as it comes to us in the echoes of war, in the prayer for relief, in the cry of despair."¹⁰

After the atrocity at Wounded Knee in 1890, the Indian "problem" press play dropped almost out of sight. Passage of the Dawes Severalty Act in 1887 had marked the climax of the Indian reform movement. This Act was hailed as the beginning of a new order in Indian-government relations. The red man was now

thought to be "on the white man's road," and ultimate civilization and assimilation were to be only a matter of time. But success could be achieved, it was believed, only by the breaking up of tribal organizations, the "real citadel of savagery." Therefore, under the Dawes Act, citizenship was extended to "all" Indians—with the exception of those remaining under tribal authority. Tribal land holdings were divided into individual allotments, with the surplus to be sold. Millions of acres of "surplus" Indian land were thus taken over by the government and sold to homesteaders, while many individuals were induced to sell their allotments. Within a few years many tribes, stripped of a large part of their holdings, were reduced to poverty; a manifestly deceitful and unwise act.

During this early reservation period (1870-1910) both the Indian and his plight had been largely ignored by the public and the press. Government policy followed the vague concept that had prevailed since the early 19th century: the belief that the Indian represented a dying race and culture. Therefore, nature and time would solve the problem.

However, by the mid-1920's it was fully apparent that, though the "wild savage" was now a legend, the Indian was very much in existence. In fact, he was actually beginning again to increase in numbers.

¹⁰ Johnson, preface.



This great photograph of the beaten Sioux, camped forlornly at Pine Ridge Agency, S. D., a few months after the death of Sitting Bull and the terrible slaughter of innocents at Wounded Knee, tells more than thousands of words of our tragic mishandling of the "Indian Problem."

This situation forced, again, a reassessment of Indian Policy. And for the first time since the 1880's an honest and sincere attempt was made by Congress and the Indian Office to study the whole complex problem from the standpoint of the Indians themselves,¹¹ not from the materialistic viewpoint of too many white men.

Following John Collier's appointment as Indian Commissioner in 1933 by President Roosevelt, emphasis was placed upon economic rehabilitation, tribal management of their own affairs, and cultural freedom and opportunity. In addition, native arts and crafts, religions, traditions, and group relationships were revived, encouraged and protected. Instead of trying to reduce all groups in the United States to the same pattern, the Indian Office was beginning to see the value of encouraging, within one nation, many different races and customs. The policy of assimilation was wisely replaced by one emphasizing mutually beneficial coexistence.¹²

These vastly improved government policies and viewpoints, were, in a sense, a national expression of changes in the concept of the Indian that had evolved since 1890. Hatred and fear of the Red Men no longer existed, now that he was a helpless ward confined to comparatively small and generally undesirable tracts of land. Regional division no longer existed either.

The frontier was mostly gone and Indian wars were past history. A widespread interest and appreciation of Indian culture, history, and traditions, had replaced contempt. A reaction was in progress, too, motivated by pangs of conscience over past inhumanity to the Original, The First American; and the pathetic condition they had degenerated to as Reservation Indians, decreed by hard-headed whites.

This sorry state into which the majority of the reservations had fallen after the turn of the 20th Century, brought a rebirth of public concern, of Indian welfare legislation and reform literature. One of the earliest modern reform books was Robert Gessner's *Massacre* (New York, 1931), which presented a merciless expose of government-Indian relations. He attacked Indian Bureau mismanagement and what he considered "inhuman mistreatment" of the reservation Indian. Here was He'en Hunt Jackson's *A Century of Dishonor* in modern dress, documented and more objective, but with the same zealous demands for immediate and complete reform which simple decency appeared to demand. *Massacre* was an attempt to shatter complacency, erroneous beliefs, and

¹¹ Angie Debo, *And Still the Waters Run* (Princeton, 1940), 351.

¹² Edwin R. Embree, *Indians of the Americas* (Cambridge, 1939), 245-249.

Again, when we face the documentation of on-the-spot photographs, of miserable ration issue methods, right, and too-speedy destruction of age old cultures (forced to adapt to a foreigner's way), below, it appears that the U.S. was little better as a Colonial power than were other nations whom we now criticize.



the impersonal, romantic concept of the red man that had become commonplace since the 1890's.

Periodicals of the 1930's were rather reminiscent of the Eastern reform era of the 80's, in their wide-spread demands for improvement of the Indian's social and economic status. With this renewed interest in Indian welfare, came new evaluations and appraisals of the Indian in general. Dr. W. Carson Ryan, Jr., then Director of Education, U. S. Indian Service, wrote, "it is now recognized that the Indian is not intellectually inferior to the white race as was once commonly supposed."¹³ In *World Tomorrow*, Paul Pfuete asserted that although today's Indians are slovenly, impoverished reservation-pensioners, they were once proud warriors. And even the conservative *Literary Digest* was moved to declare that our red men were a "kindly, cultured, . . . moral people, with a firm belief in God . . .," previous to the degenerating influence of the white invader.

In looking backward these writers were expressing honest beliefs that would, nevertheless, have drawn violent protests from Colonel Frank Triplett or the disillusioned Samuel Clemens. But in this concept of a once proud, independent, and noble race, some reformers and crusaders were envisioning a revitalization of the red man, if not to historical status, then at least to self-sufficiency and self-respect. And this feat was to be generally started through Commissioner John Collier's new scientific and sociologically-motivated Indian Program.

Under the Indian Reorganization (Wheeler-Howard) Act of 1934, Western tribes were finally permitted to vaguely manage their own affairs. The allotment of lands in severalty was ended, cultural freedom was encouraged, and the sad pol-

icy of assimilation was replaced by one based upon "mutually beneficial coexistence." This return of the reservation Indian to his pre-Dawes Act status thus completed the circle of government-Indian relations in a span of about 80 years.

In the literary and journalistic world, concomitant with revised government policy, the 19th century concept of the noble savage blossomed anew. The finer qualities of the Indian were rediscovered. As in the 1880's, this romantic idealization of the red man as a child of nature brought a deeper sympathy, with extensive attempts to understand "these complex people" and their problems. Utilizing this Christian viewpoint in his *The Wild Earth's Nobility* (New York, 1935), Frank Waters pictured the Indian as the "vanishing symbol of this new land's strange strength." In *The Last of the Seris* (New York, 1939), Dane and Mary Roberts Coolidge expressed conviction that Indians as gifted as the primitive Seris could not always have been savages; for "their songs, their stories, their gods like those of the Ancient Greeks, all point to a day when the Seris were a great people, before the White Men came."



Even the Apache, whose very name had dime novel and pulp fiction connotations for villainy and depravity, was now portrayed as a human being with normal—if not always admirable—qualities. As early as 1929, Britton Davis adopted this new viewpoint in *The Truth About Geronimo*, while Frank C. Lockwood's *The Apache Indians* (New York, 1933) defended Apache murder and plunder as the only way he knew to maintain his existence against an overwhelming white invader. Albert Britt, in *Great Indian Chiefs* (New York, 1938), asked the reader to lay aside prejudice and sentimental sympathy as "we have laid aside our fear," and seek to understand the Indian as the original occupants of our soil. Edwin R. Embree complained of the color prejudice that had long prevented accepting Indians into our society. He attacked those bigots who believed Indians to be an inferior people.¹⁴

By 1940, Oliver LaFarge was able to write of the new hope that lay ahead for our native population. He appealed for a continuation and improvement of present trends in Indian-white relations. Mari Sandoz, in her fine biography, *Crazy Horse* (New York, 1942), skillfully expanded her life-long convictions that the old buffalo-hunting Sioux were a truly great people. And this greatness, she believed, would some day reach full flowering again as they walked the "hard new road of the white man."

Despite all of the good writing, in recent years the "wild west" pulp magazines have played a sizeable role in perpetuating the frontier "Red Devil" concept. With action first and poorly-drawn plot secondary, the development of Indian character is incidental. Too many such writers generally follow a fixed pattern, depicting the Indians, with few exceptions, as half-naked, fiendish killers with the "smell of blood in their nostrils." These evil-faced, cruel-featured American aborigines are all mortal enemies of every white. Never to be trusted, they delighted in luring frontier settlers into a false sense of security, then attacking unexpectedly. Bloody carnage is the inevitable result (although the scalp-hungry warriors are seldom victorious). Obviously, the Indians of these

publications have undergone little change from the most barbarous redskins of the 19th century dime novel.

During the 1930's, too, motion picture plots generally adhered to the later dime novel and "wild west" pulp magazine concept of the Indian. The red man became fully stereotyped as one of the hazards to be encountered and overcome in the settling of the West. He was the ever-present peril that provided thrills, excitement, and suspense to pioneer and Western movies. With Hollywood's tendency to emphasize action and bloodshed, Indian-white relations on the screen were seldom peaceful and almost never accurate.

Following World War II, the movies, and later television, were strongly influenced by the example set in the better documented literary field. More and more sympathetic and objective screen versions of the Indian have appeared in the succeeding years. By the 1950's, the pendulum had swung. Even though most of the pictures were still slanted to the white point of view, "bad" whites were beginning to outnumber "bad" Indians. The redskins still went on the warpath; but now the trouble was almost always instigated by cruel and self-seeking white men. The Indians were docile, innocent, and friendly until aroused by some dishonest deed which inevitably perpetrated a sudden reversion to savage barbarism.

Although post-World War II literature continued the *beau savage* tradition, the earlier popularity of this concept was undermined by a revival of honest realism in Western writings. For example, A. B. Guthrie, Jr.'s truly great historical novel, *The Big Sky* (New York, 1947), portrayed the Indian realistically through the eyes of the Mountain Men of the 1830's. This book, and other accurate historical novels of the frontier, depicted the Indian much as they should have been evaluated in an earlier period by frontier people. This is also true of Ernest Haycox's novels of the Indian wars of the 1870's, in which he has utilized an intelligent frontier concept of the period. On the other hand, more in keeping with the noble savage concept. Elliott Arnold's *Blood Brother* (New York,

1946) and Dorothy Gardiner's *The Great Betrayal* (Garden City, 1948) presented the Indians as a totally noble race.

Today, the noble savage idea, perhaps, dominates the thinking of the average American, East or West. The word "Indian" means a stern-faced, painted warrior, wearing a war bonnet and riding a pinto pony. This colorful figure of the past is a symbol of the Old West and the American Frontier. Immortalized by writers, movie producers, and Indian pageantry, this stereotyped, stoic, somewhat heroic image has become a permanent part of our national tradition. Not so prevalent any more is the less flattering view of the Indians as a degenerate race; or as once proud and free but now crushed to a servile stature, existing on government handouts and perhaps preying on gullible tourists as a sideline. This latter (and actually more accurate) view has been fostered by cartoonists and commercial artists who have had a field day with the red man. They commonly see him as potbellied, huge-nosed, with beady eyes set close together in a poker face, unromantic and odd.

Although the Nation's Indian Policy is no longer divided by conflict between Eastern humanitarians and Western frontiersmen, division on the policy level still exists. In the 1880's it was believed that a few years of education and land ownership would convert our Indians into civilized citizens, readily assimilated into white society. But now, nearly seventy years after passage of the Dawes Severalty Act, authorities such as John Collier and Oliver LaFarge maintain that our Indians are not yet ready for full-fledged independence; that they are still bound to primitive traditions and culture; that they would be unable to adapt to modern society if these ancient ties are too quickly broken.

On the other hand, some government officials and politicians are convinced that the reservation tutelage system is continu-

ing to destroy the Indians, socially and morally—that as government wards they have become content with letting someone else support them, now and forever. Thus today's policy makers are confronted with these alternatives: Should the paternalistic system continue or should federal wardship be discontinued in the immediate future with complete assimilation the goal?

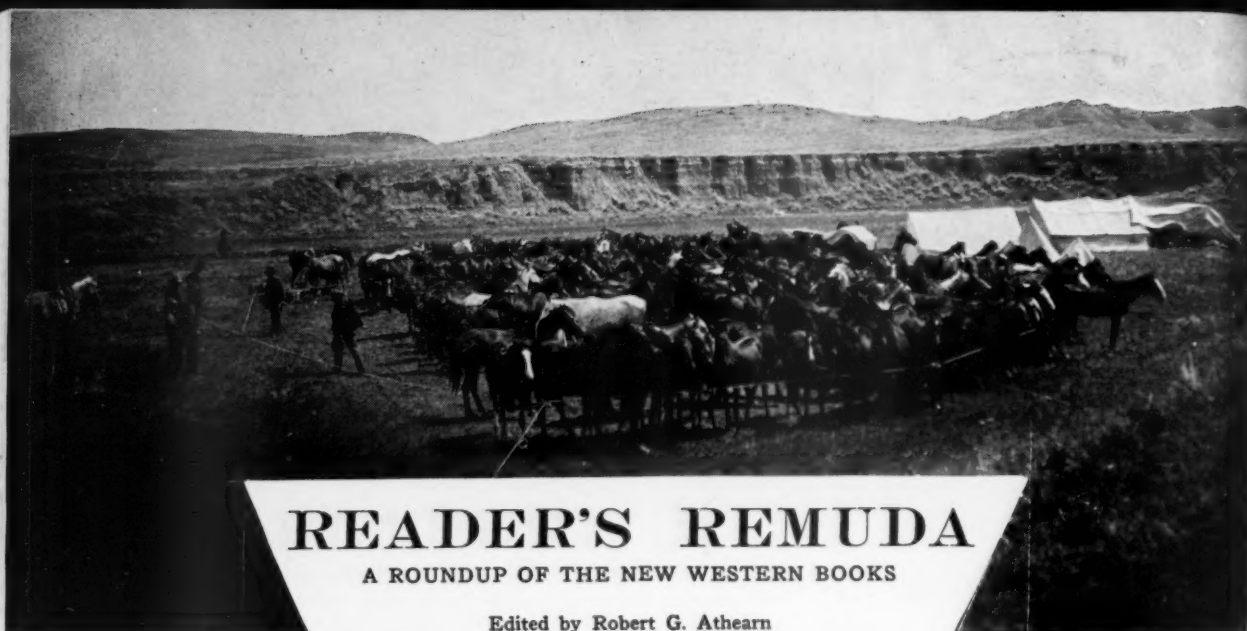
During the past four years the U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs has again been reducing its responsibilities. At the same time it is encouraging Indians to assume an increasingly greater role in the management of their own affairs. In August, 1953, Congress passed a resolution which declared that the policy of the government was to render the Indians of the United States, as rapidly as possible, subject to the same laws and entitled to the same privileges and responsibilities as other citizens. Thus contemporary policy is moving toward the elimination of Federal wardship over the tribes.

This program, if continued unchanged on its present course, could eventually result in the complete absorption of the Indians into white society and their disappearance as a distinct racial and cultural entity. Thus George Catlin's observation that the red men "as a nation of human beings . . . are fast travelling to the shades of their fathers . . ." is even more applicable today than it was a century ago. With his assimilation and disappearance, the American Indian will cease to have contemporary significance. If that time comes, both the problem and the concepts will be largely historical and all of the contentious issues of the past century should have been reduced to academic concepts. But this seems doubtful. Ever since the first white man set eyes on the American Indian, he has been misjudged—either overly villified or overly glorified. Since this has been more than three centuries in the making it does not appear probable that national objectivity on the subject will develop in much less than an equal span of centuries. Lo, the Red Man will still be with us for many, many moons.

[THE END]

¹ Dr. W. Carson Ryan, Jr., "Special Capacities of American Indians," *School and Society*, XXXVI (Dec. 17, 1932), 777.

² Embree, 243, 247.



READER'S REMUDA

A ROUNDUP OF THE NEW WESTERN BOOKS

Edited by Robert G. Athearn

THESE THOUSAND HILLS, by A. B. Guthrie, Jr.: Houghton Mifflin Co. 346 pp. \$3.95.

Reviewed by Walter Van Tilburg Clark.

In "These Thousand Hills," his third novel, Pulitzer Prize winner A. B. Guthrie Jr. tells the story of the backwash from the finished westering—a flood that reversed its course to fill the inland empire already traversed by the pioneers. The story is told by way of Lat Evans, Montana rancher; its end-product is the slow, contentious thickening toward civilization in that territory that put an end to the predatory interlude of buffalo skinners, Indian fighters and open-range cattlemen. Like Mr. Guthrie's two previous volumes, "The Big Sky," a magnificently pictorial account of the mountain-man era, and the steadily moving "The Way West," which told of the Oregon Trail, "These Thousand Hills" is spaciouly conceived and closely thought out. With it, Mr. Guthrie puts beyond question what many of his readers had already guessed, that he is working deliberately and with foresight within the larger intention of depicting the opening and development of the American Northwest.

If this were the only certainty concerning Mr. Guthrie's work as a whole to emerge from "These Thousand Hills," it might give rise to as much uneasiness as hope about what is yet to come in the chronicle. There are ways in which this

work is not so strong a book as either of its predecessors, and only too often the task of sustaining a long, planned series, especially within the arbitrary frames of history, can weary an author into dead writing and formula plotting. But, if there are signs of less successful work in "These Thousand Hills," it is also, in itself and in what it makes clearer about "The Big Sky" and "The Way West," the sufficient proof that they have not resulted from any cheapening of intention or weakening of will.

On the contrary, as a longer glance back now shows us, Mr. Guthrie has worked out a method admirably suited to keeping each book complete and alive in itself, and making it serve its purpose in the whole at the same time. And this method, once seen, provides us with the much more important certainty that the author is sustained not only by a historical concern which well might wane but also by a fictional aim of a higher and more durable sort. And that both the method and the intention are still at work in "These Thousand Hills."

Because we have such deep respect for the historical novels of Bud Guthrie—and nagged by an impossible deadline—it was not possible to do our own review and have it appear in this issue. This was too timely and too epic an event to hold until our Spring issue. We appreciate deeply the gallant rescue, which got us just under the printer's gun, on the part of Walter Clark and THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW (Nov. 18, 1956) who graciously granted us this privilege. THE EDITORS.

"The Big Sky" tells the story of the mountain men. True, but more to the point, it does so by means of a profound re-creation of the life, internal and external, from its rebellious beginnings to its shadowy passing, of one highly credible, complete mountain man, Boone Caudill. And this concern for the individual, even though he may be at the same time a representative of his kind, creates a strong, unbroken narrative movement, though it presents an aimless, wandering, almost unconscious life, for which the simple fact of being is almost enough. And, of equal importance, presents it as dominated by that splendid, vast and impersonal wilderness which creates it and which makes simple being enough.

"The Way West" tells the story of the Oregon Trail, that almost compulsive migration of farmers which led to the first consequential settlement of the Northwest. This was a collective movement. No one man, until he emerged from it in trial, could embody it. But Mr. Guthrie gave it the fictional power of the particular by telling it in terms of the journey of one wagon train, and then, increasingly, by way of the life of one family within that train, the Evans family, from which, finally, the proven figure emerges. And here the same wilderness that was splendid panorama in "The Big Sky" becomes mostly a narrow, fearful vision to the right and the left, and a series of heartbreaking obstacles ahead. The same world is not the same world to a solitary, free-moving hunter and to a family-burdened farmer.

Moreover, the two novels are linked (though with a wise looseness) by the presence in both of one character, Dick Summers, that incomplete, part-farmer mountain man who was Boone Caudill's mentor. In "The Way West" he becomes the remote and faintly contemptuous guide of the wagon-train, and the equally useful guide to the reader, inducing the retrospective glance, and mediating in the comparison of mountain man and emigrant.

Now, in "These Thousand Hills" Lat Evans, conceived and born out of wedlock in that wagon-train, and divided between

the frustrated westering impulse of his grandfather and the stern, guilty, God-fearing fixity of his father, turns with the backwash into Montana and performs, fictionally, both a bridging service comparable to Summers' and the major duty of embodying his time. For the time also is divided, is the time of a similar conflict between the dying old West and the growing new West of towns, fenced ranches, businesses, railroads, banks, churches and schools. So Lat moves, an inturned man in a back-turning world, slowly and in torment through the end of one age: a long range drive, a season of last-gasp buffalo skinning, imprisonment by uneasy Indians off the reservation, a horse race with betting with other Indians, and a love affair, of the border kind, with Callie, a prostitute in Miss Fran's parlor "house."

Next come the beginnings of another age: a bank loan to start Lat's ranching, his marriage to a religious-minded school teacher, Joyce Sheridan, his survival (because he had cut and stacked hay) in the terrible winter of 1886-87 when the last open-range-minded men were finished, a reluctant part in a vigilante action against horse thieves. There was trouble with Callie, and trouble with Joyce because of Callie (one has to choose between two rights, he said, and that was a word for his life), and trouble with Tom Ping, the incurably open-range Texan who had been his partner on the trail and in the buffalo camp but became his enemy when the sides were chosen. None of this is easy for Lat. In finally turning away from Tom Ping, refusing his challenge to a gun fight, and in returning, half devoted, to a Joyce who cannot understand, he makes not his peace but his compromise with the new age.

It would appear, then, that Mr. Guthrie has sought to embody the spirit of each era of his series in the kind of man created by that era and most important to it. It would also appear that he has sought to give the very form of each book a reinforcing likeness to that spirit—for "The Big Sky," a world vast, loose and scenic; for "The Way West," a world narrow and moving, and for "These Thousand Hills"



Some critics are now rating Guthrie's writing on a par with the accurate salty documentation of cowboy C. M. Russell's art. Certainly both rated high in authenticity and feeling.

a world tight, various, uncertain and contentious. And if "These Thousand Hills" does not move with quite the certainty and power of its predecessors, it seems likely that the difference results, not from any faltering on Mr. Guthrie's part, but from the nature of his materials. It may be that it is not possible to render the complexities of an era of increasing density, involvement and moral debate with the same unity or within the same scope that will serve the wonderings of a lone or the progress of a single, obsessive passion, and that Mr. Guthrie will be forced, as his chronicle continues, to move a little more slowly, to deal book by book with phases, not epochs, with men representative of phases not of an age entire.

It is to be hoped that the chronicle will continue. What emerges above all from a consideration of "These Thousand Hills" and a glance back at "The Big Sky" and "The Way West," is the fact that Mr. Guthrie is moved by a fictional purpose as high and valid as his historical purpose is big, and that the two are soundly related, that he is writing, out of the real events of a real world, something like a spiritual epic of the Northwest.



FRONTIER EDITOR, by Daniel W. Whetstone. Hastings House, New York, 1956. 287 pp. \$4.50.

Reviewed by Dorothy M. Johnson,
Montana State University.

Young Dan Whetstone was not exactly welcomed with enthusiasm when, in 1909, he established the weekly *Pioneer Press* in Cut Bank, on Montana's northern plains 50 miles east of the snow-capped Rockies. One of the cow town's leading saloon keepers prophesied, dismally, that if a newspaper started up it would soon be followed by churches. He was absolutely right.

This is not just another book of personal reminiscences by another country editor—it is a history of economic change written by a man who was and is keenly aware of the meaning of events. The *Pioneer Press* has recorded up-and-down history, near-ruin, and present prosperity.

The great open-range stockmen were just facing defeat from homesteaders when young Whetstone went to Cut Bank because his native Minnesota seemed pretty tame. After two years of record-breaking crops, the homesteaders in turn faced defeat from the accursed trinity—wind, weeds, worms—and four years of drought. Then small farms became big wheat ranches. And then what was under the soil became as important as what grew out of it for lo! there was oil. And there still is black gold in abundance in the region surrounding Cut Bank.

Naturally, there were people connected with all this. And seldom does a book of facts contain so many good stories of odd-balls and their antics as does this one. The stories about real people (who presumably

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THE LIFE AND PERSONAL WRITINGS
OF EUGENE MANLOVE RHODES: A
BAR CROSS MAN, *by* W. H. Hutchin-
son. University of Oklahoma Press, 1956.
xxii, 432 pp. \$5.

The late Eugene Manlove Rhodes had a devoted following that perennially regretted, along with Rhodes himself, that his stories of New Mexican cowboy life were not so available in book form as the work of many competitors who knew far less of the West. Probably it was never large. None of his books sold above thirty thousand copies, and at that in low-priced reprint editions; yet it was dependable enough, short of the hard-cover trade, so that the *Saturday Evening Post* took most of his output between 1907 and 1934, when he died.

short magazine stories) it was partly because they and the intelligently handled characters came out of his keen experience. But Rhodes' public also bought Rhodes himself as a man who was a legend in his own lifetime; formerly being one of the cowboy characters he wrote about; something of a gambler and ne'er-do-well; a champion of men and causes, from local refugees under justice to Albert B. Fall. He believed in the integrity of the English language, the purity of womanhood, and the superiority of the cattle-raising West to other Wests. One of the somewhat incredible cowboy types in his stories who quoted Shakespeare, Dickens, and Lewis Carroll (and rather awkwardly explained their literacy) was not myth, but rather a composite of Rhodes and other men whom he knew.

Hutchinson and his publisher fail to clean up a few minor slips in language and form; expressions as dubious as "finalize" and "articled critic" (this describes Bernard De Voto); misplaced footnotes; the name of Rhodes' publisher, which appears repeatedly as "Houghton, Mifflin" for periods long after the comma had dropped out. Sometimes the reader may find difficulty in joining together the letters.



But anyone who has read Rhodes or Andy Adams or Charlie Siringo; or anyone who like to ride vicariously in the Southwest range country, will be grateful for the devotion and prodigious industry that brought forth this useful book. Hutchinson's choice to allow Rhodes, for the most part, to speak for himself is well-handled and commendable. It may lead more of us to appreciate the work of a literary artist whom the literary critics, for the most part, never quite discovered. It may lead more of us to read or re-read one of the most able of all Western writers—Eugene Manlove Rhodes.

* * *

FRONTIER PHOTOGRAPHER: STANLEY J. MORROW'S DAKOTA YEARS, by Wesley R. Hurt and William E. Lass. University of South Dakota and University of Nebraska Press, 1956, 135 pp., 100 photographs, bibliography, \$4.50.

*Reviewed by Dwain Ervin,
North Dakota Agricultural College*

Photographer Stanley J. Morrow, a contemporary of Brady and Jackson, left a vivid pictorial record of frontier life in the Upper Missouri Valley as the result of his professional activities in Dakota Territory from 1868 to 1883.

The authors have selected one hundred views from the Morrow collection of stereoscopic slides at the Museum of the University of South Dakota to illustrate the range of Morrow's travels and subjects.

The text contains a well documented account of Morrow's professional career in the West, an interesting explanation of the technical aspects of early photography, and a thoughtful commentary on the photographs chosen for this work. Morrow's travels took him from his headquarters at

Yankton as far as Helena in Montana Territory. His subjects ranged from army posts and Indian life to the mining frontier of the Black Hills Gold Rush.

Added interest is given to this too small volume by the inclusion of photographs taken by Morrow while he was participating in such events as General Crook's "Horsemeat March" and the Custer Battle Reburial Expedition. Although its seven chapters are somewhat uneven in length and in quality of text and pictorial interest, and the printing and format do not compare with the lavish quality of some of the recent western picture books, this is, nevertheless, a most commendable addition to all libraries and collections of Western Americana.

* * *

THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN REVOLUTION, by Stewart H. Holbrook. Henry Holt and Company, 1956. \$3.95.

*Reviewed by Carl Ubbelohde,
University of Colorado.*

Two years ago, eighty-eight year old Harry Orchard died at the Idaho State Penitentiary. For forty-eight years he had lived within the confines of those walls at Boise, in punishment for setting the bomb that tore apart the house, and ended the life of Idaho's former Governor Stennenberg. In the years before that explosion



Morrow photo of Custer battle reburial.

Harry Orchard had adventures enough as a hired killer to fill the three hundred pages of this book.

Orchard's life as a peddler of death for pay is far from pretty reading. By implication and suggestion, the lives of those he worked for, including the leaders of the Western Federation of Miners, were not pretty either. The violent clashes between miners and mine-owners in the Coeur d'Alene fields of Idaho and the Cripple Creek fields of Colorado provided professional hatchet-man Orchard a market for the history of those clashes to tell the story of Orchard's life.

This is no analytical study of the Federation of the industry—no attempt to fix responsibilities or describe consequences. *The Rocky Mountain Revolution* is the story of one revolutionist—a revolutionist who worked his trade of violent death for the Federation only because it had need of him, not because of any deep-rooted sympathy with its objectives. This is, in fact, a story without a hero.

But the story of Harry Orchard is a good story well told. It has the vital suspense of a first-rate mystery, made more vital because it all actually happened in the not-too-long-ago.

* * *

DRUMMERS AND DREAMERS, by Click Relander, with a foreword by Dr. Frederick Webb Hodge. The Claxton Printers, Ltd., 1956, 345 pp. \$6.

Reviewed by Edgar I. Stewart,
Eastern Washington College of Education.

This is one of those books which should be written but which, strangely enough, a competent authority seldom gets around to writing.

It is the story of the Wanapums, or River People, whose few remaining members live along the Priest Rapids area of the Columbia River, where that stream breaks through the Beverly Gap and forms a stretch of white water which in the early days was a very effective barrier to navigation.

Lewis and Clark called these people the Solkulkus. At that time they numbered several thousand warriors and dominated much of the area along the Columbia and



north of the Snake River. It is also the story of Smowhala whose Dreamer religion, expressed in dancing and in drumming, especially in the "Washat" standing dance, effectively met the invasion of the Christian missionaries, both Catholic and Protestant, and kept the tribe, despite many adversities, a distinctive group among the Indians of the Northwest.

The author, city editor of the *Yakima Daily Republic* (one of the finest newspapers of the Pacific Northwest), has written on a wide variety of subjects. He has studied this one for many years, and is himself an adopted member of the Wanapum tribe. He has made a successful effort to describe the culture of this little-known people before the last of its members have disappeared. He has thus performed a great service in preserving the record for the benefit of posterity.

This is a book that needed to be written. Our knowledge of Indian culture would be much richer if similar books had been written before all vestiges of some of the smaller tribes disappeared and their records were wholly lost. For a white man with a conscience, this volume is not always pleasant reading, since it describes the destruction without adequate compensation of a culture and a civilization, a destruction that was without excuse and in which the destroyer can find little of which to be proud.

The book also contains a great deal of contemporary material on the various dams which have been built and are being built along the Columbia River; and of the part that hydro-electric power and irrigation have played in the development of the region. Some of the material is repetitious but this is a minor flaw in so excellent a book. It is well illustrated; in fact, the illustrations alone are worth the price of the book.



A TOUR ON THE PRAIRIES, by Washington Irving. Edited with an Introductory Essay by John Francis McDermott. University of Oklahoma Press, 1956. xxxiv, 214 pp., map. \$2.00.

Reviewed by Colin B. Goodykoontz,
University of Colorado.

Washington Irving's minor classic, *A Tour on the Prairies*, describes his experiences while attached as secretary *pro tem* to a commissioner who had been sent to visit Indians in the east central part of the present state of Oklahoma. The expedition with an escort of Rangers left Ft. Gibson on the Arkansas in October, 1832, and returned after a month's journey through the Cross Timbers and the valleys of the Cimarron and the Canadian.

Nothing very exciting or important happened on the trip, which apparently was of no great significance in Indian relations. Irving said modestly of his book that it was only "a simple narrative of every day occurrences; such as happen to every one who travels the prairies." Nevertheless it was well received. The first edition of 1835 has been followed by more than thirty in English, and twenty in translation!

This new edition, a volume in the fine Western Frontier Library, has been prepared by John Francis McDermott of Washington University, St. Louis, who previously edited Irving's *Western Journals*. In his introductory essay Professor McDermott makes a discriminating appraisal of Irving's contribution in the *Tour*. He points out that, although it does not contain many facts of the conventional sort (such as scientific and ethnological data) it is factual in that it "fixes" a scene of human activity or a personality.

The author did not merely record information, he captured life as he saw it be-

yond the frontier: making and breaking camp; fording a stream or crossing in a boat made of buffalo hides; penetrating tangled underbrush and "cast-iron forests"; hunting buffalo and catching wild horses; observing Indians; watching the behavior of undisciplined and improvident Rangers. As is suggested by his pen name of Geoffrey Crayon, Irving was "an artist with the pencil . . . who substituted the word for the stroke of the crayon and the brush."

The editor's authoritative notes explain and amplify the text; a map shows the day-by-day progress of the tour.

* * *

LONE EAGLE . . . THE WHITE SIOUX, by Floyd Shuster Maine, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1956. 208 pp. \$4.50.

Reviewed by Merrill J. Mattes, Historian,
National Park Service.

This is a book to satisfy the most ardent of Western romanticists. It purports to be an entirely true story, and what more could one ask of a true story than this? An orphaned child of white missionaries to the Oglala Sioux, stricken by smallpox in 1890, is adopted by Chief Big Elk and Cloud Woman, members of that tribe. Unaware of his existence, an older brother (the author), raised in New Jersey by relatives, comes west in 1908 and is puzzled by the fact that an Indian greets him as "Lone Eagle." This is the beginning of a series of coincidences which bring the brothers face to face on the Crow Reservation and launch their partnership in ranching in the desolate Musselshell River country.

The bulk of the book dwells modestly on their ranching adventures among cowboys and Indians, together with several excursions into Sioux Indian lore related



by Lone Eagle. With the exception noted below, it is all pleasantly nostalgic with interesting commentary on the tribulations of homesteading, buffalo hunts, roundups, rustlers, Sioux customs, and a few odd characters.

The chapter relating to the Battle of the Little Bighorn will intrigue—and confuse—historians. The version of the Custer affair given here is grossly inaccurate in some respects, although doubtless of historical value to the extent that it offers new eyewitness accounts. The veracity of Curley, a Crow scout for Custer who claims he witnessed the battle and escaped unscathed, has been seriously challenged by historians. On the other hand, one cannot dispute what Crow Dog, Spotted Rabbit, Big Elk, Lone Bear and others told Lone Eagle, and allowance must be made for the fact that warrior participants in the heat of battle will have a viewpoint somewhat unlike historians gifted with hindsight 80 years later. Even so, there are some things that clearly don't hang together and thus mar the credibility of other unverifiable details.

Some assertions are in harmony with facts generally understood: for example, that Sitting Bull was confined to his tent during the battle, that there was no single warrior chief, and that many Indian women participated in the fighting. The list of around thirty Indian dead, the disclosure of nearby Cheyenne graves and the lurid description of Custer's demise are details which might well be true, though must be taken on faith. But the author has no business presenting an Indian version which ignores or rather bypasses large and elementary facts.

Lone Eagle leaves out any reference to the crucial Reno engagement which preceded the Custer debacle on June 25, or

the siege of troops under Reno and Benteen that lasted through June 26. On the contrary, Lone Eagle affirms that the battle lasted only two hours, and ruins his whole case by making the preposterous assertion that Reno (not General Terry) showed up two days later to discover the dead and bury them. The only mention of Benteen (misspelled "Bentine") is that some of the soldiers under his command showed up at the 50th anniversary celebration of 1926.

Lone Eagle's testimony is haywire on other counts. He has the Indians "stampering *all* the horses and pack animals" when, as a matter of fact, many of the horses were slain by troopers themselves for barricades, while Benteen's pack train was miles away from Custer's immediate command. He states also that hundreds of mounted warriors encircled the troops and mowed them down, whereas the predominant testimony has been that, for the most part, the Indians were dismounted, and fired on the soldiers from the shelter of ravines, creeping forward with caution.

Finally, he has the soldier dead "buried in the Custer Battlefield Cemetery further down the slope," whereas the monumental burial shaft he is talking about is in fact not in the cemetery at all but on the highest point of the hill where Custer died.



GHOSTS OF THE GLORY TRAIL, by
Nell Murbarger, Desert Magazine Press,
Palm Desert, Calif. 1956. \$5.75.

Reviewed by Muriel Sibell Wolle,
University of Colorado.

Most books are read and laid aside. Nell Murbarger's *GHOSTS OF THE GLORY TRAIL* is a book that will make its readers impatient to go to the places she depicts so vividly.

Compressed into 277 pages of text, the author packs not only vital statistics of the 275 ghost towns she has visited but she also shares actual experiences connected with these trips and introduces her readers to the still hopeful and contented oldtimers, who live active but reminiscent lives in the quiet, all-but-forgotten camps.

The area covered is a big one. To quote from the book: "Between the Wasatch Mountains, of Utah, and the crest of California's Sierra Nevada, lies the Great Basin of the Intermountain West—a high, wide, wonderful land of few people, and far horizons, and cold, bright stars, and limitless sky. It is also a land of ghosts—the Ghosts of the Glory Trail."

Miss Murbarger is no novice at ghost-hunting. For years she has ferreted out whatever was left of hundreds of once booming camps; and has preserved their history through photographs and more than 1,000 articles in magazines. She has traveled uncounted miles to reach some camp where, from sagging empty cabins and the ruins of business houses and mills, she could reconstruct, through words, the look, feel, smell and sound of the place, as it appeared when its streets teemed with life and its permanence seemed assured.

In describing Callao, Utah, she writes: "Possibly the most amazing thing about the town—to an outsider, at least—was the way time seemed to have been frozen in its stride, so that the Past was all mixed up with the Present. Like the old Pony Express station, for example . . . because it had been in use through all its 92 years—and was still being used by third and fourth generation Bagleys—it was one of the best preserved Pony Express stations in Utah."

Wherever she travels she takes you with her. Her car bumps across the Nevada desert to reach Tule Canyon. "Dropping down the mountainside to the wide, brown sweep of Lida Valley, the dusty road bored into the west for ten miles, to the rim of a rocky canyon. Nosing down its side in a sharp, steep pitch, we turned into a sandy wash that floored the cut from wall to wall. . . . Already I could see old mine workings and scattered prospect holes."

She knows every oldtimer who lives in one of these remote places. Take Pine Valley as an example: "I found Uncle Cell spending the afternoon with one of his sundry daughters-in-law. A tall, spare patriarch, neat and clean as a sugar pine, he came equipped with a devilish glint in his eye, and a crooked, infectious grin. When I said I was writing a series of 'early settler' interviews for the *Salt Lake Tribune* and would like some information about pioneer times in Pine Valley, the old man jerked his head in assent, and smiled. 'I can give you all of it,' he said crisply. 'All that's fit to print, and some that's not! What, in particular, did you want to know?'"

For Western Americana enthusiasts, for ghost town fanatics, for those who would travel the dim desert and mountain trails through pungent sagebrush and alkali deserts, *Ghosts of the Glory Trail* is a book impossible to put down unfinished.



"You can give me a saddle without the horn. There's no traffic at Two Dot."

ATHEARN SCORES AGAIN!

WILLIAM TECUMSEH SHERMAN AND THE SETTLEMENT OF THE WEST, by Robert G. Athearn. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1956. xix, 371 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. \$5.00.

*Reviewed by James C. Olson,
University of Nebraska.*

We've had a lot of books over the years—good, bad, and indifferent—which tell tales of individual Indian skirmishes or of military life on the frontier. We've needed a well-written book which provides an overview of the scattered Indian fighting on the plains and in the mountains and relates it to its central purpose—the settlement of the country. This splendid book by Robert Athearn admirably fills that need.

The career of William Tecumseh Sherman in the years following the Civil War is, of course, a tailor-made vehicle for providing an overview of the Indian wars of that period. From 1865 to 1883 he was successively commander of the Military Division of the Missouri, which comprised most of the plains and Rocky Mountain areas, and General of the Army of the United States. In both capacities, he saw clearly that his primary vision was protecting the vanguard of settlement as it rolled into America's last frontier, and, as the author states in the Introduction and demonstrates clearly in the pages that follow, "he revealed a real concern with the progress of western settlement and an understanding of the many problems attendant upon that historic movement."

Sherman himself had more than his share of those problems—ranging from caustic comments by western editors that he was either unable or unwilling to deal with the Indians to anguished cries from well-meaning but misguided eastern friends of the Indians that his policy toward them was too harsh. Essentially, of course, his basic problem was that of trying to spread too few soldiers and too little equipment over too vast an area. The Army had a real war on its hands, but the nation technically was at peace—and after years of

bloody, heartbreaking civil war, it was determined to enjoy the fruits of peace to the fullest.

Congress, reflecting that mood, turned a deaf ear to requests from the Army for funds to fight the Indians. It was much more receptive to grandiose projects for pacifying the Indians without fighting them. When these projects collapsed—as they did with distressing regularity—the Army was rushed into the breach. Too often it was inadequate to meet the demands imposed upon it. Sherman fumed and fussed at his inability to operate more effectively in the interests of western settlement, but there was little he could do. Ironically, when his old chief, General Grant, became president, and he (Sherman) went to Washington to take command of the entire Army, the situation got worse instead of better as he found himself completely ensnarled in the politics of what was fatuously styled the "Peace Policy."

Athearn records Sherman's problems and his efforts to solve them with faithful attention to detail, but always keeping in mind the requirements of presenting the overall situation. He even manages to keep the Battle of the Little Big Horn in proper perspective—no mean accomplishment for anyone writing about the Indian wars.

In addition to making a significant contribution to the history of the West, Athearn rounds out this able biography of General Sherman by setting forth in detail, for the first time, the full story of his eighteen years of service after the Civil War. The years as commander of the Military Division of the Missouri and of the United States Army were less spectacular than the march to the sea. But they were no less significant, and Athearn, in his treatment of this aspect of Sherman's career, has made a notable contribution to our military history. Moreover, this is no mere politico-military potrait. Sherman, the man, clearly emerges from these pages.

In short, the book demonstrates once again why Dr. Robert G. Athearn is emerging as one of the leading interpreters of the history of the West, and why the University of Oklahoma Press stands pre-eminent in its field.



LAST OF THE OLD WEST ARTISTS

THE ARIZONA RUSSELL, R. FARRINGTON ELWELL

BY FREDERICK A. MARK

BUFFALO BILL could see a man in a boy as well as he could see a horse in a colt. At Boston with his Wild West Show in 1890, his keen eyes observed a 15 year-old boy making pencil sketches of the horses, Indians and, yes, of the Colonel himself.

The former hunter and scout believed explicitly in himself, so it was natural for him to be interested in anyone who could make a good sketch of his handsome countenance. Cody was also attracted to the boy's tall, muscular physique. The showman quickly struck up a conversation. This acquaintance was the beginning of a close association between the two that was to last for a quarter century. That boy, then an amateur artist, was R. Farrington Elwell, still actively working at his easel in Phoenix, Arizona.

In his lifetime Elwell has produced hundreds of canvases, sketches and sculptures. Elwell was born in 1874, in Massachusetts. His career as a painter and illustrator crossed trails with able veterans already in the field—Russell, Remington and Paxson, to name a few. In fact, Elwell and Remington frequently hunted together when Remington was a guest of Colonel Cody at the famous Wyoming "T E" Ranch.

Little did young Elwell realize, either, upon his acquaintance with Colonel Cody, that he was in succeeding years to acquire the acquaintance and friendship of many other great and well-known men of the day: Teddy Roosevelt, John Goff—T.R.'s guide, Diamond Jim Brady, Nat Goodwin, Frank Daniels, Generals Miles and Sheridan, Joe Miller of the famed 101 Ranch, John

Ringling, Jess Willard, Will Rogers, Fred Stone, along with Charlie Russell, Frederic Remington, and many other artists. Among famous women known by Elwell, Annie Oakley tops his list. There were not many well known he-men of that day with whom Colonel Cody was not well acquainted. Many of these men felt equally at home on Fifth Avenue and in the Rocky Mountains.

Elwell and Remington had much in common. Both were born and educated in the East and had similar cultural backgrounds. Their appearance on the Western scene was quite accidental. I presume Remington's heart was in the Southwest; I am sure Elwell's is still in the Northern Rockies.

Elwell's paintings and illustrations have been before the public for 64 years. Although

he has given little attention to promoting his work, it has been exhibited, upon request, in such cities as New York, Columbus, and several times in Boston. It has pretty well advertised itself. Today, as always, the tall, dignified man is more interested in discussing early days in "Wyomin'" than of pushing his art interests. He has never had the advantage of either teacher or agent.

Most of his art revolves around the West at the turn of the century; like Russell, it includes the Indian, cowboy, hunter and trapper. In his pictures and writings he lives over again much of the life shared with Buffalo Bill on the ranches, the plains, and on trails of the foothills and mountains. One feels the thrill of his enthusiasm for the great outdoors in all the pictures he writes about. In total

From the Sand Hills, Buffalo Bill Cody looks down

on a protege who still paints

the Western scene with a masterful brush . . .

breadth his work has a wide panorama—from Shakespeare to the early mountain man.

In addition to the brush and pen, R. Farrington Elwell has sculptured heroically and well the Indian, cowboy and hunter. Years ago he wrote Western stories of the cowboy and hunter from real experiences during his early years in Wyoming. These stories he also illustrated. Such stories appeared in leading magazines of the day—*Outing*, *Everybody's*, *Leslie's* (later to become *The American*) and *Youth's Companion*.

The accidental meeting of Colonel Cody and young Elwell resulted in closer association the following year (1891) when Cody again visited Boston with his show. The old scout asked Elwell to come West with him; and with considerable reluctance from Elwell's parents, it was arranged. Who could cope with or remain negative before argument with that princely, handsome, dignified hero of that day? Young Elwell headed west for a season's test.

Thus began what seems a strange association between these two men, which was to last so many years. Their temperaments were far apart, but confidence in one another never waned. Until this day, to R. Farrington Elwell, Colonel Cody was one of the greatest personalities and finest of men that ever lived. After much of that first season in Wyoming, Elwell spent the greater part of several succeeding years with Cody in Wyoming. He was never without his sketch book, and in his

spare moments was improving his art.

Most of the next two or three years were spent in the East; however, Elwell seldom missed the fall hunt from Cody's headquarters in Wyoming. During this time Elwell engaged in engineering work for the city of Boston, but in spare time he was constantly sketching, painting, and improving contacts and relationships with editors, publishers, and others interested in using his paintings and sketches. Then Elwell returned west. He remained for years with Cody Enterprises in Wyoming, except for occasional winter periods spent in New York and Boston. Few painters and illustrators have remained active and popular in the field for as long a period as has R. Farrington Elwell.

In the earlier years as an artist, Elwell restricted his easel work to black and white wash and oils, and pen sketches for illustrations. His first serious oil painting was done for Forbes Lithograph Co., illustrating the Tower Slicker, famous for its use on the "hurricane deck" of both seaman and cowboy.

At 17 years of age Elwell had been illustrating books for Lothrop & Co. When 19 he had already utilized some of his early western experiences in illustrating western scenes and characters of the cow country. By the time Elwell was 25, he was writing and illustrating for many of the leading 19th century maga-



zines: *Youth's Companion*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Literary Digest*, *Outing*, *Harper's McClure's*, *Pearson's* (both American and English editions) and *Century*.

A long list of books—too numerous to itemize—carry his illustrations. Among these however is one printing of the western classic, *Log of a Cowboy*, by Andy Adams.

Demand for Elwell's paintings and illustrations for advertising purposes came later and from a larger field. Among the notable users have been U. S. Cartridge Co., Hopkins and Allen, Harrington & Richards Arms Co., and Winchester Arms Co. Wide use was made of western scenes and action pictures for calendars by such concerns as Brown & Bigelow, Kemper-Thomas, Osborn, Knapp, Gerlach-Barklow, and Dow. Among the principal lithograph concerns using Elwell's work were: Forbes, Powers, American, Rushing-Wood, Lord Baltimore, and Ketterlinus.



But even this does not encompass the breadth of Elwell's art. As a child he had experimented with snow and clay figures. Many years later, the Buchanan Company of Boston produced Elwell sculptures for Winchester Arms Co., Samoset Chocolate Company, Ladies Home Journal, and Tower Slicker Company. In admiration of Colonel Cody, Elwell created a plasticene sculpture of the scout mounted on a favorite horse.

During recent years, Elwell has made twenty or more pastels with a technique he believes is his own. These pastels are developed with color on the pure white background of the board. They have been exceptionally popular among art fanciers and the public.

If you are among fortunate collectors who have managed to dig up some of the vivid old posters, pamphlets and brochures used for advertis-

ing and popularizing "Buffalo Bill's Wild West" and "Congress of Rough Riders of the World," you will note that many of them were signed by Elwell.

Perhaps the success of R. Farrington Elwell as a painter and illustrator cannot be credited to any one influence. His talent as an artist was evident before he was four years old. Self development with family encouragement was never lagging. But the opportunity Buffalo Bill gave him to visit the West is probably the real key to his success. He became a permanent Westerner before the turn of the century, when the life of the cowboy had changed little since trail driving days. The impact of the tremendous popularity of Buffalo Bill and his show, with real buckskindressed Indians and able rough riders, enhanced Elwell's ability to pick up the realism of the times. Then,

too, there were the almost daily incidents of ranch life and the hunting of big game, which on canvas recorded graphically a quickly fading romance. Perseverance in technique and adherence to his artistic ideals were important too, because this artist had no formal art lessons.

If we can say Catlin and Miller recorded the raw fur-trader West, and Paxson, Remington and Russell, the wild and woolly West, then perhaps we can say that Elwell, like W. R. Leigh, recorded that transitional period between the wild West and the new transitional West. In the midst of the great responsibilities thrust upon him by Colonel Cody, in managing Cody's cattle and horse ranches, hotels, and in even engineering his irrigation project, Elwell never gave up his artistic dreams. Somehow he always found spare moments

Elwell captures a tense moment in the always awesome stampede over a cutbank in the masterful oil, left, titled "A Fighting Chance." Perhaps the two cowboys may turn the longhorns. Below: "Meat The Cook Didn't Order."

to record incidents of the hunt and roundup.

He knew the local Indians well and was a good friend of Sioux Chief Iron Tail, of whom he made a fine painting and sculptured piece. Elwell, like Russell had a deep respect for Indians, believing them to be a noble and honorable people, capable of doing great things in their own way. He still feels that they have been greatly misunderstood by the white man.

As a small boy, Elwell's sketch book was his constant companion. It is little wonder that one so devoted to artistic approaches illustrated a book when only 17 years old.

Elwell still does not use models. He gets action into animal pictures by studying each part of the object separately. He has what dramatists call "power of projection." That is, he imagines himself to be the character he is picturing for the time being. Such power of visualization has been developed by few artists: yet it is a powerful base for creative work. Perhaps that is one of the main reasons Mr. Elwell's brush and pen have found so many far-flung avenues.

You may see an Elwell painting anywhere from Pasadena to Boston—in the offices of professional men and company executives, in public buildings and homes. There is scarcely a use for art where R. Farrington Elwell's talents have not been used: Books, sculptures, calendars, magazines, newspapers, exhibitions, public buildings, offices and homes.

To me, these paintings fire the imagination. I find myself wondering how the fellow got out of the predicament El-

well puts him in. His horses and other animals are very real. They reflect, vividly, the mood of the incident. Most Elwell action pictures are poised in climax of the incident. Elwell releases the expression of the hunter as he grasps the rifle and presses the trigger. There is life in the antelope as it springs in flight over the prairie. There is vastness in the elemental character of the site. There is bright color and sunshine, too, aplenty.

In one painting he almost makes you feel sorry for hungry coyotes, looking across the snow-covered valley in the moonlight at a few scattered houses in the distance.

Strangely, while young Elwell was brought up near the sea, and he spent many hours on it as a boy, it has only been a minor subject for his work. Long before he got there his heart was in the West. And since he was 16, R. Farrington Elwell has lived, only intermittently, outside the West. Near his half-century mark when





Real excitement and drama, plus a knowledge of the Wells, Fargo period are painted into this fine Elwell oil, which like most, is undated. The title: "Jack-knifing the lead team".

the Cody empire was crumbling away and the "wild west" with it, Elwell turned East again. For a period he developed some of his best pictures from scenes and incidents he knew so well from the mountains and the plains.

But it was not long before Mr. Elwell admitted to himself the lure of living in the West could be held off no longer. With his family he returned to the beloved moun-

tains of Wyoming. This time he purchased his own ranch, not far from Cody's home ranch, and eventually developed it into a going Morgan horse-producing enterprise. But due to the encroachment of "horseless buggies" only his art work kept the ranch out of the red. Eventually Elwell had to admit that his Morgans could no longer compete with Henry's flivver. Reluctantly he returned East again.

He developed a second "farm" studio, with an acreage for privacy, and adorned the walls with relics of the West—elk horns, rifles, bear skins, and selections of his paintings. But even this could not hold the Elwell family for long away from their beloved West. Again the westward trek, but now the family knew it was for the last time. Back to Wyoming for a while, then on through Utah, and finally south to Arizona—the last stand.

Here Mr. Elwell added to his vast ranching experiences, the whole of which would fill volumes, and pursued his painting. Today, at 82, one finds Mr. Elwell an able and active artist. There is still six feet of elastic Westerner in that tall, straight frame clad in Levis and topped with broad brimmed hat. Still young for his years, which has characterized him throughout his life, his hair has greyed to blend with blue-grey eyes. And his tanned, kind face reflects the period for which his paintings are best known—the hospitable West.

[THE END]



"Now or Never", the artist tersely captioned this one, and that seems to tell the story. Note the animation and excitement of horse, man and bear.



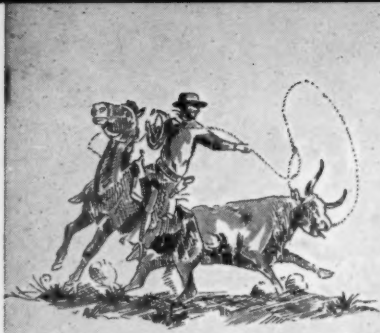
↑ This dramatic oil, "Separating the Brands" combines some of the good qualities of Both Remington and Russell art. Below, "What the . . . !", somewhat akin to C. M. R.'s famous "Bronc to Breakfast" is an action-packed painting. Right, a recent photo of R. Farrington Elwell, still "tall in the saddle" in the finest western tradition.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR . . .

Mr. Mark is a very active member of the Spokane (Washington) Corral of The Westerners and as such he is constantly researching and writing on matters pertaining to The West. This is his first published piece in this magazine and we think it calls for more.





DIRECTOR'S *Roundup*

K. ROSS TOOLE

In October a Great Plains Conference on Higher Education sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation was held at the University of Oklahoma. Inspired by Carl Kraenzel's excellent book, **The Great Plains in Transition**, this Conference was designed to investigate the problem of the cultural vacuum in the Great Plains area.

There were three main speakers and many panels and discussion groups. In the main it was a revealing and tragic spectacle. In the first place, many of the participants didn't know enough about the Great Plains to discuss the matter intelligently. In the second place, few of the participants had read Kraenzel's book though it was at the core of the matter. One of the three principal speakers kept referring in his address to the Middle West—as if the Middle West and the Great Plains were synonymous. In the third place, the majority of those who discussed the problem were from urban centers and demonstrated a singular lack of knowledge about rural problems.

The absence of State College and Experiment Station people was unfortunate. These people **do** understand many of the problems of the region. They may have failed to communicate their understanding—but they were omitted, even as resource people.

The Great Plains can hardly be termed a predominantly urban area. In the fourth place, a large percentage of those in attendance were academicians which would have been fine if their academ-

ic pursuits had qualified them in any way to talk about the Great Plains. It didn't. Most of them had humid area background. It was a pretty egg-headly session.

A few actual plainsmen were there. They represented a strong minority. Dan Fulton from Ismay, Montana, was one of them. I don't expect Dan made himself too popular because he kept dropping bombshells into the discussion. But what he had to say was cogent because he not only knows the Plains from having lived on them for many years but he is widely read on the subject. Dan's discussion group was one of the few that actually got close (sometimes) to profitable discussion. There were others: (a) A group from Lamar, Colorado, representing Chamber of Commerce, school and religious interests who are putting on community events to collect money to get Kraenzel to come to speak to them. (b) An influential woman from St. Frances in West Kansas who was certain that the University of Kansas must get acquainted with the semi-arid problems and need for institutional service in the Plains. (c) A group of citizens in northeast Colorado who sent a special delegation with their own finances to encourage the Plains point of view and to encourage a sub-area conference of this type at the grassroots level. (d) Obed Wyum, a farmer of North Dakota, who was an enthusiastic disciple of adult education on the grassroots level in the Plains, and pleaded for information about the characteristics of the region and its fundamental problems for use by such discussion groups.

If a Great Plains Institute as proposed by Carl Kraenzel ever comes into being let us hope that the people involved know something about the Plains. And let us hope that the people from the humid part of the Great Plains will know more about the region and will, at least partially, face-up to their responsibilities in their semi-arid backyards. Whatever foundations or universities may be involved let us hope that their representatives are less ethereal and more practical; that they understand that you begin with an analysis of rainfall and not an analysis of why the average plainsman doesn't care for Picasso. Because whoever tries to superimpose humid area institutions and humid area culture on the Great Plains populace will fail.

And one more thing: If such an institute is packed with pseudo intellectuals who regard bucolic pursuits as somehow unclean and who have an ill-disguised contempt for the small town, the farm and ranch and their way of life, better there be no institute at all. At the October Conference there were entirely too many of that ilk. I'm not being anti-intellectual. I'm being anti-pseudo intellectual.

Let the Great Plains institute, if it comes into being, keep the messianic humid area people out of it. Let plainsmen themselves and real scholars of the Plains, wherever they come from, call the turn. If that is done there is great promise in the institute. And also let the institute listen to the people who are closest to the soil. That is where it must all begin.



THE NEW YEAR DAWNS EXCITINGLY FOR COLLECTORS OF OLD WEST AMERICANA

The Trigg-Russell gallery at Great Falls, Montana, recently received all of the remaining mint copies of the long-out-of-print classic *Then and Now* by Robert Vaughn. They are being offered at \$25. Here's what Pulitzer Prize-winner A. B. Guthrie, Jr., has to say about this rare and valuable old book:

"Robert Vaughn's book, covering 36 years of experience in the Rocky Mountain region, is a prize item for students of Montana history and a valuable addition to any western library. Of particular local interest are his stories of the Sun River valley, where the town of Vaughn marks his memory. It is a stroke of good fortune that remaining copies of his work have been made available to the Great Falls Russell Gallery for sale to the public."

We are also pleased to announce to patrons and devotees of Charles M. Russell that three of the choicest reproductions of his work ever offered to the public are now available. All are in approximately original painting format, plus matting, and all are the result of the latest and best reproduction techniques. They include the magnificent, "The Wagon Boss", "The Salute of the Robe Trade" and "The Jerk Line." These superb Russell art reprints will be shipped, carefully wrapped, prepaid to any address at \$15 each. Be sure and consult us for western books which you may not find elsewhere. Write for our free print list of more than 200 exciting reproductions of Russell art.

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FROM THE STAFF OF THE MOST WIDELY READ JOURNAL OF AUTHENTIC WESTERN HISTORY IN EXISTENCE



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CHRISTMAS AT LINE CAMP

A FIRST REPRODUCTION FROM THE ORIGINAL PAINTING BY CHARLES M. RUSSELL

*Best wishes for your Christmas
Is all you get from me,
'Cause I aint no Santa Claus
Don't own no Christmas Tree*



*But if wishes was health and money,
I'd fill your buck-skin poke,
Your Doctor would go hungry
An' you never would be broke*

Charles M. Russell
Christmas, 1914



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